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SHOPPERS DRUG MART
SEE WHAT'S NEW... CHECK OUT OUR LATEST OFFER ON PAGE 26

Thursday, March 27, 2014
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TAKING CONTROL

DAY 2 OF METRO'S LOOK AT FIRST NATIONS SCHOOLS: DOES THE NEW ACT GET A PASSING GRADE?

PAGES 14 & 15

Ross leads Raptors in breaking the Boston curse

Toronto wins 99-90, their first on Boston hardwood in a total of 12 games PAGE 42

Cops begging on the street? Is their budget all that bad?

Officer disguises himself as panhandler in effort to catch distracted drivers PAGE 8

Killing lions and cubs was for the greater good, says zoo

Danish zoo, which killed and dissected a giraffe a month ago, defends new cull PAGE 10

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Subway tracks and blunt attacks

Plus, a subtle hint of crack. Mayoral debate focuses on transit and the candidates' records

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
jessica.smithcross@metronews.ca

Mayor Rob Ford's challengers steered away from attacking him directly on his crack use and the ongoing police investigation into his alleged criminal connections in their first debate of the election campaign.

In fact, the only person to use the word "crack" was one of the reporters who was chosen to ask the candidates questions mid-debate.

The CityTV debate saw five top candidates — Ford, Olivia Chow, Karen Stintz, David Soknacki and John Tory — frequently raising their voices and talking over each other in a chaotic fashion.

The section of the debate devoted to leadership turned into a noisy attack on Ford.

Chow took a shot at Ford, calling his claim of saving the city $1 billion "a billion-dollar lie."

"It's time to take down the circus tent at city hall. Rob Ford has made Toronto an international embarrassment. It's time for change. It's time for a new mayor with new ideas and new priorities," she said.

Tory attacked Ford for lacking respect for the office that he holds.

From left: Karen Stintz, John Tory, Olivia Chow, David Soknacki and Rob Ford greet each other before going head-to-head in their first Toronto mayoral debate on Wednesday. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

"You've let the taxpayers of this city down very badly, you've let the citizens down and let the reputation of this city down," he said.

In turn, Ford attacked Tory for "falling flat on his face" in provincial politics and Chow and Soknacki for their connections to former mayor David Miller's administration.

When Ford was asked by CityTV reporter Cynthia Mulligan why voters should trust him, considering his admitted crack smoking and the ongoing police investigation, he said the question was a "rewind, rewind, rewind."

"I'm the first person to say I'm not perfect; maybe these people are," he said.

When the candidates talked about policy, it was almost exclusively about transit.

Ford committed to building subways on Sheppard and Finch and a downtown relief line. When he repeated his assertion that the streetcar on St. Clair — which he considers a failure — is an LRT, Soknacki told him it's not.

Ford ignored that.

Instead, he retorted that he has saved $1 billion despite being told he didn't understand finances back when Soknaki was Miller's budget chair.

The candidates disagreed on building an LRT or subway in Scarborough. Chow, who favours building an LRT, said that the experts agree it serves the area best.

"It's the experts who live in Scarborough you have to listen to," said Stintz, who supports a Scarborough subway.

Stintz questioned Tory on how he would plan to pay for transit, and he said he would release a complete financial plan later in the campaign. He attacked Stintz's plan to build a downtown line with money from the sale of some of the city's stake in Toronto Hydro — which he said would deprive the city of millions in dividends.

"It's really important we not fire-sale assets and make hasty promises," he said.

Tory and Chow sparred on the issue of contracting out garbage collection. Tory would contract it out. Chow would keep public collection east of Yonge, prompting Tory to call Chow "hidebound to (her) union friends."

"I don't need to take any lessons from you; we're not on the golf course," said Chow, making a reference to Tory's unpopular comments on his former radio show about how learning golf would help women in business achieve pay equity.

MORE OF WHAT THE CANDIDATES SAID, PAGE 3

CANADA STANDS AS A GLOBAL LEADER IN SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT*

PERCENT OF LAND IN CANADA COVERED
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TOTAL AREA: 5.7 MILLION KM^2

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CANADA'S ANNUAL DEFORESTATION RATE IN RECENT YEARS: 0.01%
(NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA)

PERCENTAGE OF BOREAL FOREST HARVESTED ANNUALLY: 0.2%
(CANADIAN FOREST SERVICE)

PERCENTAGE OF BOREAL FOREST LOST TO INSECTS, DISEASE AND FIRE ANNUALLY: 1%
(CANADIAN FOREST SERVICE)

PERCENTAGE OF BOREAL FOREST REGENERATED AFTER HARVESTING: 100%

BY LAW, ALL FORESTS HARVESTED ON PUBLIC LAND MUST BE SUCCESSFULLY REGENERATED. RESOLUTE'S EXPERIENCE SUGGESTS THAT ABOUT 75% OF HARVESTED FORESTS ARE REGENERATED NATURALLY, AND THAT THE REMAINING 25% REQUIRE HUMAN INTERVENTION.

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Toronto mayoral debate

Noisy chaos as Ford challengers avoid Rob Ford crack references

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

PHOTOS BY THE CANADIAN PRESS

Olivia Chow

"Mr. Ford, it's time for you to go because your gravy train has turned into a train wreck."

"We've had it with the scandals and the lack of truth. It's time for you to go." (To Ford)

"It's time to take down the circus tent at city hall. Rob Ford has made Toronto an international embarrassment."

Rob Ford

"People have heard the story. It's rewind, rewind, rewind. People know my track record. They know they can go to sleep at night knowing their tax dollars are being watched."

"I said I was going to stop the gravy train and I have."

"This is a no brainer. We cannot support LRTs. Subways are efficient and they move people the quickest."

John Tory

"The problem with you, Rob, is you will make decisions on any host of subjects without the facts in front of you."

"Mr. Ford has made an admission. He's run out of gas. He can't get anything through council anymore."

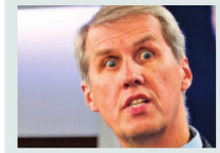
"You have let the taxpayers of this city down.... Maybe you'd like to address that." (To Ford)

Karen Stintz

"I love Toronto. I will ... fight for it and that's why I want to be your mayor."

"When I think of my city I look through the eyes of my children.... It's important to remember we work for the taxpayer. But we also have an obligation to be role models."

"We have had this fight. We need to focus on the fix." (on Scarborough subway)



David Soknacki

"The politics of division and intimidation have no place in my Toronto."

"It's time for us to wake up from the nightmare and embrace a brighter day together."

"When you skip practice and sometimes don't even show up for the game, tell us, Mr. Ford, why do you keep letting the team down?"

... I happen to have Mr. McLuhan right here

Michael McLuhan, the son of Canadian media visionary Marshall McLuhan, on Wednesday stands next to a portrait of his father painted by Shelley Adler. The painting is being given to Marshall McLuhan Catholic Secondary School. McLuhan is known for coining the expressions the medium is the message and the global village, and for predicting the World Wide Web 30 years before it was invented.

JOEL EASTWOOD/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto Pan Am Games

Liberals defend awarding $81M contract to U.S. firm

Ontario's Liberals are standing by a decision to award an $81-million private security contract for Toronto's 2015 Pan Am Games to an American company. They say the OPP looked at all the bids and decided Contemporary Security Canada best met the requirements. But the opposition parties are questioning why they passed on an Ontario-based company whose bid was reportedly $14 million lower.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Why is no one talking about buses?

Idea. With the transit debate revolving around LRT and subways, Olivia Chow's looking to the seemingly forgotten vehicle on four wheels

A proposal by mayoral candidate Olivia Chow to improve bus service raises an obvious question: Why isn't that mode of transportation a bigger part of the transit debate?

While most talk these days is about light rail transit (LRT) and subways, Chow revealed last week that if elected she would increase bus capacity by 10 per cent on the busiest routes by keeping in service those buses soon to be retired.

The move would cost an estimated $15 million per year but would add capacity at only a fraction of what it costs to build dedicated lanes for bus rapid transit (BRT) or an LRT.

To some, the suggestion makes sense.

"I have always argued that the surface system carries the majority of riders," says Coun. Gord Perks. "And it's that reliability and frequency — that backbone — that builds ridership. Not pencil-crayon planning with subways that may or not get built."

The TTC will have retired 185 buses by year-end, and it's debatable whether they could stay on the road.

Commission staff are looking into Chow's proposal, but spokesman Danny Nicholson says there are two problems.

"The buses we're going to retire are really old," he says. "The older ones have reached the end of their lifespan.

"The other question is where do we store them."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"Transit riders want to know that if they miss a bus, there's another one coming in a couple of minutes." Coun. Gord Perks

Sorry about last year, Jays fans. Please come again — XOXO, Joe Carter

Toronto Blue Jays alumnus Joe Carter surprises fan Sergei Kuprejanov with season tickets for the Jays at the UPS store on King Street Wednesday. World Series hero Carter personally delivered tickets to a select number of long-standing season-ticket holders across the GTA in a UPS package car.

JESSICA SMITH/METRO

Vandalism

City fighting graffiti with art

Graffiti cleanup is a million-dollar problem for Toronto.

Public surfaces — street furniture, buildings, light standards, bridges — sometimes don't stay pristine for long before they're adorned by spray-painted tags. That's why the city is hoping that an anti-graffiti program successful in Calgary will have similar effects in Toronto, discouraging taggers from attacking traffic-signal control boxes at intersections.

In a pilot project, four such boxes have been wrapped in the vinyl artwork of Toronto artists.

"Artists do respect each other's work," says Elyse Parker, a director in the city's transportation department, explaining why the artwork should deter tagging.

One design is by Gary Taxali, who regularly does illustrations for the New York Times and Rolling Stone. The other is by the late nature photographer Moira McElhinney.

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porterescapes.com

Salamander run shuts road

For the third consecutive year, Burlington officials are closing a city road for nearly a month to grant endangered Jefferson salamanders safe passage to their breeding ponds.

Starting on March 27 and running through April 17, King Road in Burlington will be closed from the base of the Niagara Escarpment to Mountain Brow Road.

"The closure is a significant conservation measure, because the annual migration puts salamanders at risk," Bruce Zvaniga, the city's director of transportation services, said.

Now an annual tradition, the road closure ensures Jefferson salamanders make it back to the ponds they were born in, so they can breed.

A group of Halton ecologists discovered that the Jefferson salamander suffered high mortality rates while attempting to cross King, said Hassaan Basit, Conservation Halton's communications director.

For an endangered species already threatened with extinction, road traffic was an extra threat, Basit said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Can't lose with three of a kind

Montreal sisters, from left, Olympic mogul gold medal-winner Justine, Maxime and Sochi silver-medallist Chloe Dufour-Lapointe address media after they were honoured by Deputy Mayor Norm Kelly at the Mattamy Athletic Centre. ANDREW FRANCIS WALLACE TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Outcast cats nipping at the condo bubble

A purrfect home?

Pawsibly. Pilot project will provide multi-unit shelter to feral felines

The Toronto real estate market just got a little more crowded — and a lot furrier.

Cat condos, which provide shelter from the cold for Toronto's feral cat population, will be distributed throughout the city in the next couple of weeks as part of a pilot project.

Because they'll shelter more cats, the multi-unit plywood boxes, their interiors lined with Durofoam insulation, will hold in more heat than traditional cat shelters meant for one or two cats. Each unit costs around $100 to $150 to build.

"The condos have two levels and four units, so it's like four apartments on two floors," said Bill Howes, the shelter building coordinator for the organization behind the units, Toronto Street Cats.

"They will accommodate anywhere from four to a maximum of 10 cats, depending on how good friends the cats are," he said.

Howes said four cat condo prototypes will be provided to large, high-needs feral cat colonies. Plans are in the works for a fifth to be installed at a High Park community garden that is having a problem with pests.

"The cats pay for their board by fighting the rodents," Howes said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Feral cats eating outside a Beech Avenue house. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Kathleen Wynne

Liberals in front of Tories: Poll

A new poll suggests Ontarians are warming to Premier Kathleen Wynne's minority Liberals.

The Forum Research survey found Wynne's Grits at 35 per cent, Tim Hudak's Progressive Conservatives at 32 per cent, Andrea Horwath's New Democrats at 25 per cent, and Mike Schreiner's Green Party at seven per cent.

Using interactive voice-response phone calls, Forum surveyed 908 people Monday.

Last month, the Tories were at 35 per cent and the Liberals were at 32 per cent.

Forum president Lorne Bozinof suggested Wynne's proposal for an Ontario retirement scheme to bolster the Canada Pension Plan and her promise not to raise taxes on "middle-income" earners are finding traction.

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My licence? Don't you just want change?

Hobocop. Plainclothes officer tries to catch distracted drivers

Halton cops participating in Operation Disconnect. TWITTER

Imagine sitting in your car and being approached by a man in a hooded jacket carrying a piece of cardboard that says: "I've Got High Hopes — Frank Sinatra."

What comes to mind?

If you thought "panhandler," you would be wrong. It turns out the man is a cop, and he probably has high hopes of catching you on your cellphone.

Recently, a Toronto police officer, dressed in a jacket and jeans and carrying the above-mentioned sign, took to walking among vehicles coming off Highway 401 at Markham Road, in search of distracted drivers.

When a culprit was discovered, out would come the badge from behind the coat, and the sign would be flipped to read: "Hello I'm a police officer. If you are reading this, you are about to get a cellphone ticket."

Sneaky? Creative? Or just plain wrong?

Even if the average citizen is more accustomed to tales of undercover police officers cracking drug trafficking rings than slapping fines on cellphone users, experts say the move is perfectly legal.

"On the scale of activity designed to catch people breaking the law, it is at the low end of deceit," said defence lawyer Frank Addario, who recently crafted a draft policy on carding for the Toronto police.

Used for five days between last Thursday and this past Monday in Scarborough, the tactic came almost immediately after Ontario's increased fine for distracted driving — $280, up from $155 — went into effect on March 18.

Distracted driving has become one of the leading causes of death on Ontario's roadways. Toronto Police traffic services spokesman Const. Clint Stibbe said officers have tried a variety of ideas to remind motorists to keep their focus on the road.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Twitterverse

Reactions were mixed after a photo of a hooded officer was tweeted. Some called it an ingenious idea, with one user saying it should be implemented across the city, while another accused the police of only wanting to find more ways to fill public coffers by issuing more fines.

A Demi-charmed kind of life

Demi Lovato brought her high-energy Neon Lights tour to the ACC Wednesday, delivering a string of hits that wowed the capacity crowd with flash, yet struck an intimate, down-home feel during her friendly chats with adoring fans. The loudest cheers seemed to come for her rendition of the Oscar-winning song Let it Go, from Frozen. TOM PANDI/FOR METRO

Laurier and Laurentian

Satellite campus pitches coming

Premier Kathleen Wynne is expected to invite universities and colleges Thursday to submit their pitches, at last, for new satellite campuses that would serve high-growth areas where space on campus threatens to fall short of demand.

Wynne is expected to announce the official Request For Proposals, which at least two universities are expected to submit — Waterloo's Wilfrid Laurier University for a campus in Milton, and Sudbury's Laurentian University for a campus in Barrie.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Unlawful arrest

G20 cop suspended 1 day

A Toronto cop found guilty of unlawfully arresting a G20 protester has been sentenced to a one-day suspension without pay.

Jason Wall was walking home during the June 2010 G20 Summit when he was arrested for wearing a disguise with intent. He'd been wearing a bandana around his neck and carrying a backpack while heading to a church service. He then spent over 24 hours in custody at the Eastern Ave. detention centre, which he described as "unsanitary" and "chaotic."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Qian Liu

Neck compression may have killed student, trial hears

A York University student found dead hours after her boyfriend in China watched via webcam as a man entered her apartment may have died from neck compression, a pathologist testified Wednesday. Qian Liu, 23, was found dead April 15, 2011 in her off-campus apartment, mostly naked and face down on the floor. Dr. Jeff Tanguay couldn't arrive at a definitive cause of death but said the best explanation is mechanical asphyxiation.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Take that, Drake. Jazz fest gets grant after all

The Beaches Jazz Festival has hit the right note in its plea for government cash to help put on this summer's shows.

After stinging criticism from opposition parties and several days of scrambling, the minority Liberal government earmarked $75,000 on Tuesday for the popular and free annual festival. It's the country's largest such event, attracting 500,000 fans.

The jazz fest had sought $120,000 in funding this year.

Organizers had warned the festival, now in its 25th year, would have to dramatically cut back on musical acts after an earlier grant application was rejected with no reason given after years of aid from Ontario taxpayers. The grant typically covered 20 per cent of its budget.

"This support will help the festival consolidate their performance stages and showcase a greater diversity of musicians and performers," Tourism, Culture and Sport Minister Michael Chan said in a statement.

Premier Kathleen Wynne was put on the defensive after the jazz festival's application was rejected under the Celebrate Ontario fund.

Money was found in the Ontario Music Fund.

Opposition parties said it made no sense to deprive the jazz fest a grant while contributing $300,000 toward a concert associated with Drake and giving $500,000 to Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment to attract the 2016 NBA all-star game.

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Director of Copenhagen Zoo, Steffen Straede, stands in front of two lionesses. POLFOTO, JENS DRESLING/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Danish zoo defends killing four of its lions

Copenhagen Zoo. This cull has put the zoo on the defensive again, a month after it killed a healthy giraffe

A Danish zoo on Wednesday defended its decision to kill two aging lions and two cubs, citing the risk of inbreeding and the arrival of a new male. This week's cull has put the Copenhagen Zoo on the defensive again, a month after it infuriated animal rights activists by killing a healthy giraffe, dissecting it in public and feeding it to the lions.

In a statement, the zoo said it had to put down the lions to make room for the new, three-year-old male, saying it wouldn't have been accepted by the pride if the older male, 16, were still around.

"Furthermore we couldn't risk that the male lion mated with the old female as she was too old to be mated with again due to the fact that she would have difficulties with birth and parental care of another litter," the zoo said.

The zoo said the cubs were put down because they couldn't fend for themselves and the male would likely kill them. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zoo as tough as nature

Zoo officials hope the new male and two females born in 2012 will form the nucleus of a new pride.

- They said the culling "may seem harsh, but in nature is necessary to ensure a strong pride of lions..."

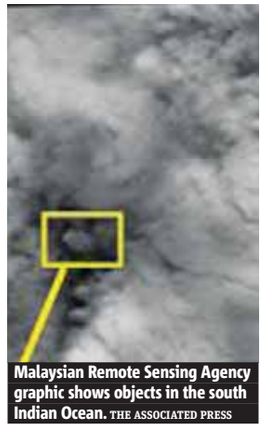
122 objects spotted in ocean offer fresh lead

A French satellite scanning the Indian Ocean for remnants of a missing jetliner found a possible plane debris field containing 122 objects, a top Malaysian official said Wednesday, calling it "the most credible lead that we have."

Defence Minister Hishammuddin Hussein said the objects were more than 2,500 kilometres southwest of Australia, in the area where a desperate, multinational hunt has been going on since other satellites detected possible jet debris.

Clouds obscured the latest satellite images, but dozens of objects could be seen in the gaps, ranging in length from one metre to 23 metres. Hishammuddin said some of them "appeared to be bright, possibly indicating solid materials."

The images were taken Sunday. Various floating objects have been spotted by planes and satellites over the last week, including on Wednesday, when the Australian Maritime Safety Authority said three more objects were seen. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Malaysian Remote Sensing Agency graphic shows objects in the south Indian Ocean. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Search now size of Alaska

Malaysia announced Monday that a mathematical analysis of the final known satellite signals from the plane showed that it crashed in the sea, killing everyone on board.

- The new data greatly reduced the search zone, but it remains huge — an area estimated at 1.6-million square kilometres, about the size of Alaska.
- Recovering any part of the plane will be tough because of the sheer depth of the ocean — much of it between about 3,000-4,500 metres (10,000-15,000 feet) deep in the search area.

Turkey

Court orders Twitter restored

A Turkish court ordered the telecommunications authority to restore access to Twitter on Wednesday, issuing an injunction five days after the government blocked access to the social network.

The ban came shortly after Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened to "rip out the roots" of Twitter, which has been a conduit for links to recordings suggesting government corruption.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Art mimics life

Movie similar to disaster on hold

A disaster movie about a jet that crashes into the ocean on its way to Beijing has been put on hold because of its similarities to the missing Malaysian plane.

Arclight Films, the company behind Deep Water, said Wednesday that pre-production has been halted for the time being.

"We're delaying it out of respect for what's going on," managing director Gary Hamilton said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

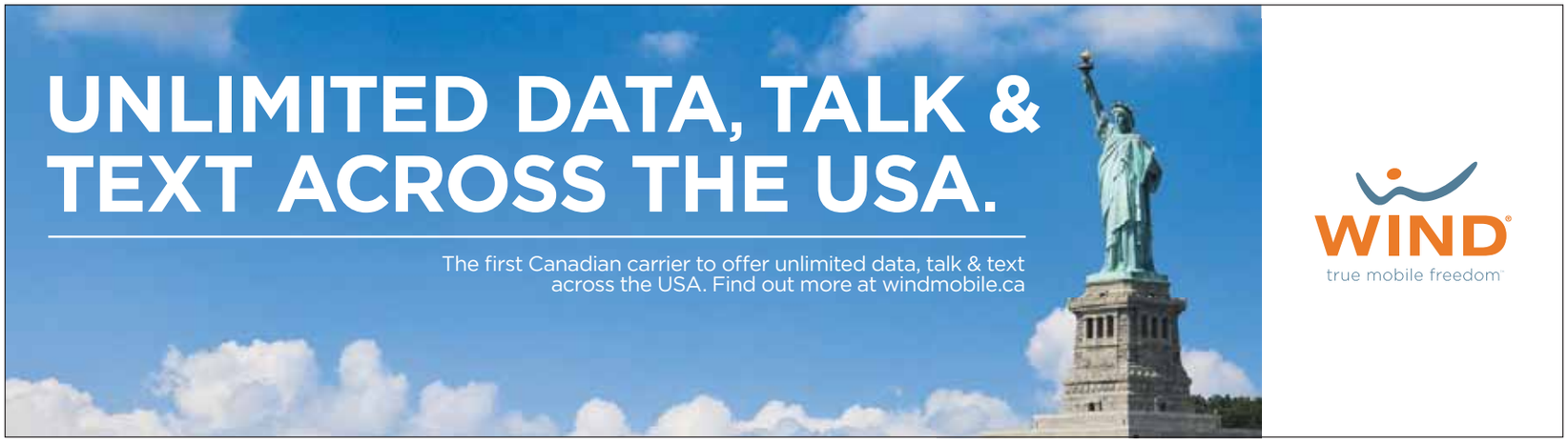
Secret Service

Three of Obama's bodyguards called home

The chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee said Wednesday he's troubled by an incident involving a drunken Secret Service agent in connection with President Barack Obama's overseas trip to The Netherlands.

On Sunday, the agency called three agents home from the Netherlands just before Obama's arrival for talks with foreign leaders.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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Germany's holy high roller fired by poor-focused Pope

Bishop of bling. Franz-Peter Tebartz-van Elst caused outrage among the flock after building himself a $47M home

Pope Francis on Wednesday permanently removed a German bishop from his Limburg diocese after his new $47-million residence complex caused an uproar among the faithful.

Francis had temporarily expelled Monsignor Franz-Peter Tebartz-van Elst from Limburg in October pending an inquiry.

At the centre of the controversy was the price tag for the construction of a complex and related renovations. Tebartz-van Elst defended the expenditures, saying the bill was actually for 10 projects and there were additional costs because the buildings were under historical protection.

Bishop of Limburg Franz-Peter Tebartz-van Elst blesses a new kindergarten in Frankfurt in 2013. Pope Francis on Wednesday permanently removed the bishop from his diocese after his new $47-million residence complex caused an uproar among the faithful. MICHAEL PROBST/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

But in a country where Martin Luther launched the Reformation five centuries ago in response to what he said were excesses and abuses within the church, the outcry was enormous.

The Vatican said Wednesday that the inquiry into the renovation found that Tebartz-van Elst could no longer exercise his ministry and that Francis had accepted his resignation.

A replacement, Monsignor Manfred Grothe, currently an auxiliary bishop in Paderborn, Germany, will take over, the Vatican said, citing a statement from the diocese.

It said Tebartz-van Elst would get a new job "at the opportune time."

It added that the Pope hoped that the faithful of Limburg would accept the decision with "docility and willingness to rediscover a climate of charity and reconciliation."

While the then-head of the German bishops' conference, Archbishop Robert Zollitsch, had been particularly blunt in his criticism of the bishop, Tebartz-van Elst had his defenders in Rome, which could explain the Vatican's decision to give him a second chance with a new job.

Francis has called on his priests and bishops to be models of sobriety in a church that "is poor and is for the poor." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Grain. Legislation tabled by Ottawa aims to clear transportation backlog

The federal government has tabled legislation aimed at increasing the movement of grain that has been left sitting in bins across the Prairies due to a transportation bottleneck.

The legislation proposes the Canadian Grain Commission regulate how much a grain company will pay to a farmer if the company doesn't meet delivery dates set out in a contract.

It also aims to extend what are called inter-switching limits from 30 kilometres to 160 kilometres in Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Most grain elevators on the Prairies are only served by one railway and expanding inter-switching would allow more service by more rail companies.

Another change would enshrine a previous government order for Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railways to move a minimum amount of grain or face a penalty of up to $100,000 a day.

A national priority

NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair has said the prime minister has to make unclogging the backlog of grain a national priority or lose Canada's place in the world market.

- The leader of the Opposition says Canada's reputation is being damaged by its inability to get last year's bumper crop to market.
- He says countries like Japan are going to start looking to the United States since Canada doesn't seem to be able to get its grain to port.

The legislation would not increase the penalty or direct fines to farmers instead of federal coffers, which is what Saskatchewan and Alberta have called for. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Ontario man wins 2nd jackpot — a cool million

Lucky lotto in London.
Robert McPhail cashes in on another big prize after winning part of a $571K pot in 1992

SCOTT TAYLOR
Metro in London, Ont.

Robert McPhail of London, Ont., won $1 million in March 19's Lotto 6-49 draw. He'd won before as part of a group that cashed in on $571,157 in 1992. CONTRIBUTED

Meet Robert McPhail: London, Ont.'s luckiest man, who claimed the second big lottery prize of his life — $1 million in the March 19 Lotto 6-49 draw.

His first round of luck came in 1992 when he was part of a group of seven that cashed in on $571,157.

McPhail was picking up a newspaper and some chocolates for his wife at a Shoppers Drug Mart when "something told me to buy a ticket," he said.

McPhail ended up buying two tickets for the draw.

"I found out about my win when checking my numbers against those posted in the newspaper," he said. "I was in disbelief. I always thought I would win again — I just didn't know when. My family members keep rubbing me for good luck."

McPhail plans to take a trip to the U.K. with his wife and may take his grandchildren on a fishing trip.

A University of Alberta math professor has figured that if you play twice a week, every week for a thousand years, the chances are better than 99 per cent that you'll never win the jackpot. It's a good thing McPhail isn't a mathematician.

Walking in a winter wonderland — in spring

A pedestrian battles the high winds and blowing snow as he walks in downtown Halifax on Wednesday, where a spring snowstorm packed a bigger punch than any of the storms that hit Nova Scotia during the winter. Halifax was brought to a standstill, with government offices, schools, retailers and transit all eventually shutting down.

TEXT: RUTH DAVENPORT/METRO IN HALIFAX; PHOTO: ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Concerns under review

Support may exist to fight old-age poverty in vets

The Veterans Affairs Department is weighing whether federal programs provide enough of a safety net to keep severely injured ex-soldiers from falling into poverty after they turn 65.

Minister Julian Fantino suggests some concerns may be addressed by a parliamentary review of the new veterans charter.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Labour

Deal reached in costly Vancouver truckers' strike

Striking truckers at Canada's largest port reached a deal Wednesday to end a strike, which has left hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of cargo stranded at Vancouver-area terminals and prompted escalating political pressure.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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CATCHING DREAMS

Day 1: the Problem
Day 2: the Plan
Day 3: the Promise

Chance

Upheaval is coming for First Nations schools. The federal government is planning to invest nearly $2 billion into the neglected system and give communities more control over their own education. Metro travelled to two on-reserve schools to document their condition, the details of the plan and why many people say the proposed changes may be their kids' last chance.

Critics speak

They threw out our work, say Liberals

Despite Prime Minister Stephen Harper's claim that his First Nations education bill is "historic" and "long overdue," Carolyn Bennett remembers when the Liberal Party made a similar attempt years ago.

The aboriginal affairs critic and Toronto MP pointed to the 2005 Kelowna Accord, a broad-sweeping piece of legislation that sought to close the gap between First Nations communities and the rest of Canadian society.

It was scrapped in 2007 in a vote after the Conservatives were elected.

"The fact that the Kelowna Accord was thrown out was very upsetting," Bennett told Metro. "The Liberals are serious about this and want to carry on the work that was begun with Kelowna."

Bennett also had few kind words for how the current government formulated its First Nations education bill. She called the initial attempt, which was introduced in November and is now undergoing revision, a complete disaster.

"There needs to be an understanding that bottom-up is the only way this will work," she said. "More paternalism and more tablets coming down from on high just serves to irritate people such that they can't even hear what you're saying."

"More paternalism and more tablets coming down from on high just serves to irritate people."

While Bennett conceded that Harper's promise of $1.9 billion for on-reserve education over seven years is comparable to former Liberal Prime Minister Paul Martin's promise of $1.7 billion over five years, she focused her criticism on how each administration arrived at the conclusion.

"(The Kelowna Accord) started with hundreds of people in a room, deciding what will be the priorities and then dividing up into working groups and 18 months later coming up with a real plan with the dollars attached," she explained.

By contrast, she said, the Conservatives have imposed their views without proper consultation and have delayed the injection of funds into the system.

"We found out when the budget was tabled those monies won't fall until next year," she said. "So in some ways it was one step forward and two steps back."

However, Bennett added there is some evidence the Conservatives have been listening and eagerly awaits the release of the newly drafted document.

"This is about fixing the greatest social injustice in Canada," she said.

JACOB MORGAN/METRO IN SASKATOON

Toronto MP and Liberal critic for aboriginal affairs Carolyn Bennett CONTRIBUTED

The First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act. Metro tracks down answers to the big questions about the government's solution

JACOB MORGAN
Metro in Saskatoon

How much will it cost?

That's the main question.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has committed a total of $1.9 billion. This includes $1.25 billion to run the system beginning in 2016 and increasing 4.5 per cent annually, $500 million for infrastructure over seven years beginning in 2015 as well as $160 million for transitional costs over four years beginning in 2015.

Shawn Atleo, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, tells Metro the 4.5 per cent escalator is a step in the right direction.

"We've been advocating for years to break the two per cent cap," said Atleo, referring to the limit placed on education funding increases in the '90s, which doesn't adequately account for inflation and population growth.

What will curriculum look like at on-reserve schools?

One of the prime minister's catchphrases is "a comparable system." The goal is to create First Nations curriculums and high school diploma qualifications that parallel those offered in non-aboriginal schools.

In addition, the government has promised to continue consulting with indigenous communities — after its original draft proposal was met with condemnation last fall — to incorporate language and cultural programs that reflect the unique heritage of all 633 First Nations across the country.

"We said we needed resources for language and culture, (and) they've identified that they put that in that $1.9-billion budget announcement that they made," said Atleo.

Shawn Atleo, national chief of the Assembly of First Nations
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

"The overriding goal of the legislation is better outcomes for First Nation students. First Nations and the Government of Canada agree that this is best achieved through First Nations control."
— Government of Canada website

How will the new act change control of First Nations education?

Until now the Indian Act has governed First Nations education. Since the end of the residential school era, Ottawa has directly administered the system.

The new bill will create First Nations education authorities, which will function similarly to school boards in the provincial system. Authorities will govern schools on a local level and ensure they meet national and provincial standards.

Bernard Valcourt, minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, tells Metro that First Nations communities will appoint their own authorities, which can represent an area or a single school.

"I don't want to control education," said Valcourt. "I want First Nations to control education and First Nations will have options."

Will there be accountability?

The First Nations education authorities will oversee administrators and require annual reports. The regular reporting is designed to ensure teachers are certified and standards are met.

Atleo said accountability is a two-way street and both sides are responsible.

"They moved away from requiring or suggesting ministerial oversight," he said. "Now we're talking about reciprocal accountability."

Valcourt added that First Nations

to act

education systems "will have to be accountable to their community, to the parents, to the kids and not to the federal government."

Who opposes this?

There are numerous groups across Canada opposing the bill. One example is the Onion Lake Cree Nation in the Treaty No. 6 Territory.

Diana Steinhauer holds a PhD degree in indigenous knowledge from the Blue Quills First Nations College and works in governance at Onion Lake. Her official title is ka-nikanapistahk, which she says is Cree for "those who can't speak for themselves, and it refers to the ones who aren't here yet: the animals, the plants, the birds."

Steinhauer explained that Onion Lake rejects the education act and any form of legislation that impedes on their sovereignty.

"We have our inherent jurisdiction over education and we're not going to relinquish it," she said.

The government is not in a position to hand over control, said Steinhauer, because treaty-rights holders should already have that power.

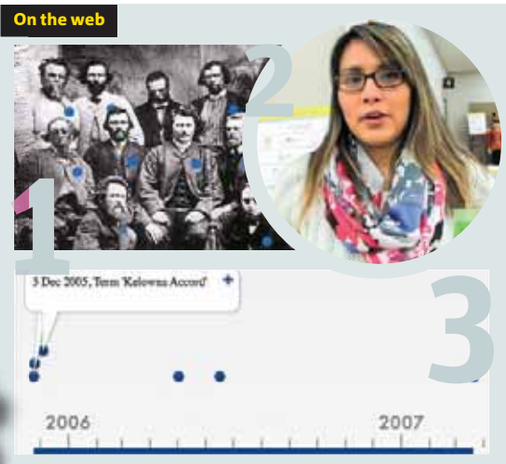
"It's not their jurisdiction to be telling us what to do," she said.

She added that the AFN doesn't speak for Onion Lake, as "it's not an inherent rights holder, it's an organization developed and funded by the government."

> "The legislation will require that First Nation schools ... award widely recognized diplomas or certificates. These requirements do not currently exist."
> — Government of Canada website

BERNARD VALCOURT, MINISTER OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

On the web



1 Blue dot. A sign of defiance
Find out how a little blue sticker became a symbol of protest for opponents of the act. CHRISTI BELCOURT/TWITTER

2 Youth. Beyond the politics
Head over to metronews.ca to see what attendees at the Assembly of First Nations Youth Summit had to say about their learning experiences.

3 Timeline. Scrapped attempt
Go online to see an interactive timeline of the quashed Kelowna Accord and hear from the national co-chair of the Liberals' Aboriginal Peoples' Commission.

Critics speak

Too much we don't know, says NDP

MORGAN MODJESKI
Metro in Saskatoon

The aboriginal affairs critic for Canada's opposition party has "major concerns" about the federal government's plan to improve First Nations education.

Announced back in February, the First Nations Control of First Nations Education Act would inject more than $1.9 billion in additional funding to address a financial shortfall for on-reserve education, starting in 2015.

But critics of the bill have questions on how — and when — the act will be implemented.

"We actually haven't seen any legislation at this point, and what my concern is, is that the process of how this is going to be drafted is unclear," said Jean Crowder, aboriginal affairs critic for the New Democratic Party.

"From our perspective, you can't draft this legislation without having First Nations at the table."

Although the federal government held eight face-to-face consultations, 54 informational briefings and received 631 responses to an online survey while drafting the original First Nations Education Act, it was widely rejected.

> "I don't know if there's two people in a closed room putting it together."

And with the federal government's recent announcement having little information on how First Nations will be consulted, Crowder said it's hard to know what its outcome will be.

Jean Crowder, NDP critic for aboriginal affairs CONTRIBUTED

"I don't know if there's two people in a closed room putting it together, whether it's going to have regional representation from across the country," she said.

While Crowder feels the government's acknowledgment of the funding gap is a step in the right direction, the fact money doesn't start flowing until after the 2015 federal election raises questions for her and her supporters.

"I can't speak to their motivation on it, but judging by the emails and letters I'm getting in my office, nobody's being fooled," she said.

"People recognize the money doesn't flow until after a federal election, and given past history, just because people say one thing before an election doesn't mean they're going to do the same thing after.

"I think the timing is very suspicious," she said.

But Bernard Valcourt, federal minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, says the act has nothing to do with the upcoming election.

"I dismiss these charges ... (of) pure political partisanship on (the) part of the people who would rather not have us in government.

"A lot of work has been done. This has been evaluated and looked at by First Nations all across Canada. We've received their views, we've got the AFN resolution, we've got the open letter of the national chief and we have identified a way forward."

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Drunk driving

Counsellor convicted of murder faces 45 years to life

A substance-abuse counsellor who drove over three kilometres through a Los Angeles suburb with a dying man on her windshield faces a maximum prison term of 45 years to life.

A jury last month found Sherry Lynn Wilkins, 52, guilty of second-degree murder, drunken driving and hit-and-run for the incident that killed 31-year-old Phillip Moreno in Torrance in November 2012.

Wilkins also has two previous felony convictions that are considered serious and make her eligible for California's three strikes law.

Prosecutors at the time of the trial said Wilkins' blood-alcohol level was nearly twice the legal limit, and that what she did to Moreno "struck at human dignity."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

More bodies found after mudslide

Search. Officials still holding out hope for survivors

With search and cadaver dogs leading the way, rescuers using small bulldozers and their bare hands pushed through sludge strewn with splintered homes and twisted cars to find 10 more bodies in the debris of a Washington state mudslide, authorities said.

Despite the grim discoveries as the search entered its fifth day Wednesday, officials were still hoping to find survivors.

"We haven't lost hope that there's a possibility that we can find somebody alive in some pocket area," said Snohomish County District 21 Fire Chief Travis Hots.

Two bodies were recovered Tuesday, while eight more were located in the debris field from Saturday's slide 55 miles northeast of Seattle, Hots said. That brings the likely death toll to 24, though authorities are keeping the official toll at 16 until the eight other bodies are recovered.

With scores still missing, authorities are working off a list of 176 people unaccounted for, though some names were believed to be duplicates. As the increasingly desperate search progressed, reports surfaced that warned of the potential for dangerous landslides in the community.

A 2010 report commissioned by Snohomish County to comply with a federal law warned that neighbourhoods along the Stillaguamish River were among the highest-risk areas, The Seattle Times reported. The hillside that collapsed Saturday outside of the community of Oso was one highlighted as particularly dangerous, said the report by California-based engineering and architecture firm Tetra Tech.

"For someone to say that this plan did not warn that this was a risk is a falsity," said report author and Tetra Tech program manager Rob Flaner.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Poland sounds warning

Ukrainian tanks are transported from their base in Perevalnoe, outside Simferopol, Crimea, Wednesday. Poland's ambassador to Canada is warning the security and certainty of the international post-Cold War era ended with Russia's recent annexation of Crimea and that NATO should have a more defined presence in eastern Europe.

PAVEL GOLOVKIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The truth is out there

Dwarf planet found in 'celestial wasteland'

Peering into the far reaches of the solar system, astronomers have spied a frozen pink world 12 billion kilometres from the sun.

It's the second such object to be discovered in a region of space beyond Pluto long considered a celestial wasteland. Until now, the lone known resident in this part of the solar system was an oddball dwarf planet spotted in 2003 named Sedna after the mythological Inuit goddess who created the sea creatures of the Arctic.

The new object, 2012 VP113, was tracked using a new camera on a ground telescope in Chile.

Like Sedna, VP is also a dwarf planet.

It measures about 450 kilometres across. By contrast, Earth is about 12,713 kilometres across.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Arctic talks continue despite rocky relations with Russia

Diplomacy. International politicians concerned about how country's actions in Ukraine may affect the situation up north

Canada may be upset at Russia over Ukraine, but conversations with the country continue over the Arctic.

Government officials confirm that a Russian delegation is attending a meeting in Yellowknife this week held by the Arctic Council, an eight-member group of countries that ring the North. All members are attending, even though the council includes some of Russia's harshest critics, such as Canada and the United States.

"The prime minister has instructed Canadian officials to review all bilateral interactions with Russia," said Amanda Gordon, spokeswoman for Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq, the current head of the council.

"For the moment, however, Arctic Council work does continue as planned."

The Yellowknife meeting began Tuesday and continues until Thursday. The delegations are being led by bureaucrats, not politicians, and are all closed to the media.

It's the second time senior Arctic officials have met since Canada assumed its two-year chairmanship of the council.

In Europe this week, Harper questioned the mentality of the Russian government, which has said Canada has no right to speak out against Russia's moves against Ukraine. Some government departments have already reduced their contact with Russia. Speaking Tuesday in Washington, D.C., Transport Minister Lisa Raitt said her department is one of them.

"In my own portfolio we have looked at where there are points of contact, and we have stopped those points of contact," she said. "We are taking this very seriously, and it goes through the entire government."

Most of the Arctic Council's work involves the collection and sharing of scientific, environmental and social information between member countries and six aboriginal groups that have permanent observer status. The council has negotiated binding agreements that include deals on the prevention of oil spills. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tory MP to table assisted-suicide bill against government policy

Former cabinet minister. Quadriplegic Steven Fletcher behind proposed law

A former Conservative cabinet minister who was left paralyzed from the neck down by a 1996 car crash plans to introduce two private member's bills which would allow assisted suicide in some cases.

Steven Fletcher, a Manitoba MP who was dropped from the federal cabinet last summer, is going against government policy with his legislation.

One of Fletcher's two bills would, if passed, allow doctors to help people end their lives under certain restricted circumstances. The second would set up a commission to monitor the system.

He wouldn't go into specific details, saying that will have to wait until after the bills are introduced in the House of Commons on Thursday.

The legislation is likely to face a tough time in the Commons, which last looked at the issue in 2010 and voted against it by a wide margin.

Justice Minister Peter MacKay said he has no interest in starting that debate again.

"I think it's a very, very personal issue, a very contentious issue; one that Parliament examined in the not-too-distant past and spoke quite clearly, pronounced itself on it, so I'm not in any hurry to reopen that issue," he said.

Saskatchewan Conservative MP Maurice Vellacott, said he will vote against Fletcher's bills.

"I think there's great palliative care and other things that we can do instead," he said.

But Fletcher said the ensuing debate is what matters, because the question is currently being argued in the courts, rather than in Parliament, where he said it belongs.

"I think it's very important that we have a debate, " he said.

He also said polls suggest Canadians in general support the idea. A Quebec bill on assisted suicide died in the national assembly when the provincial election was called.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Conservative MP Steven Fletcher leaves caucus on Parliament Hill on Wednesday. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

In context

Supreme Court to hear B.C. case

The Supreme Court of Canada, which in 1993 narrowly ruled against Sue Rodriguez in her much-debated bid for assisted suicide, has agreed to hear another British Columbia right-to-die case this spring.

Rodriguez, who had amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease, took her own life in 1994 with the help of an anonymous doctor.

"I really felt that she should have been able to legally receive what was ultimately done," Fletcher said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Derailed train operator admits she 'dozed off'

Not the first time.
Under erratic schedule, she'd fallen asleep once in February too

A derailed Chicago Transit Authority train car rests on an escalator at the O'Hare Airport station, Monday, in Chicago. The train plowed across a platform and scaled the escalator at the station. ANDREW A. NELLES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The operator of a Chicago commuter train that crashed at O'Hare International Airport admitted she "dozed off" before the accident, waking only when the train jumped off the tracks and climbed an escalator, a federal official said Wednesday.

National Transportation Safety Board investigator Ted Turpin said the woman had been working as an operator for about two months and acknowledged she'd previously fallen asleep on the job in February, when her train partially missed a station.

"She did admit that she dozed off prior to entering the station," he said during a briefing Wednesday. "She did not awake until the train hit."

He said the woman, who was co-operating with the investigation, often worked an erratic schedule, filling in for other Chicago Transit Authority employees.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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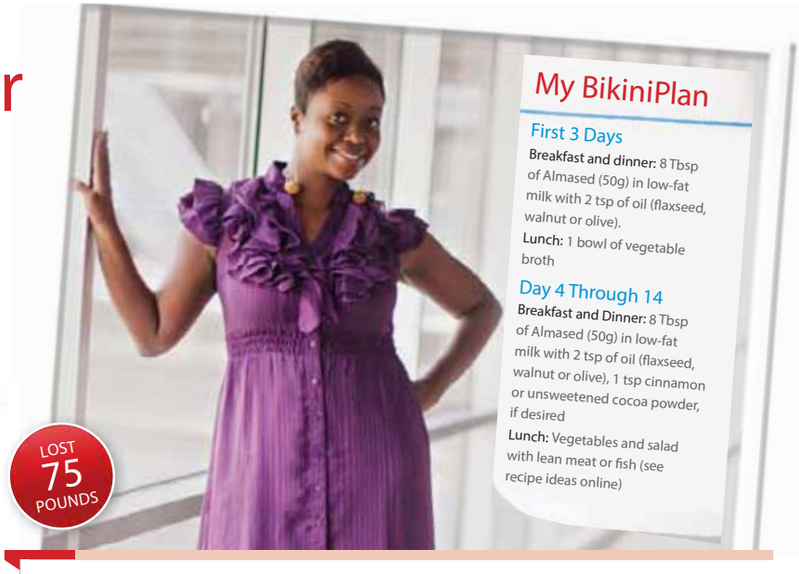
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Lunch: Vegetables and salad with lean meat or fish (see recipe ideas online)
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Saga of the sweet, then sour stock debut

Characters of the King Digital Entertainment game Candy Crush Saga walk the trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange before the company's IPO Wednesday. The festive move didn't last. King's stock priced at $22.50 US on Tuesday, valuing the company at $7.1 billion, but it opened on Wednesday at $20.50 US, down almost nine per cent. Its shares lost more ground by the day's close, falling more than 15 per cent. King Digital Entertainment PLC had $1.88 billion in revenue last year. That's more than 10 times its 2012 revenue of $164.4 million. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BlackBerry beckons business in BYOD era

Bring your own device. As more staffers use personal phones to conduct business, the Waterloo tech firm aims to provide peace of mind

BlackBerry Ltd. has received certification for U.S. government employees to use its Secure Work Space enterprise software on iPhones and devices that use the Android operating system.

The technology is a part of products that became available through the rollout of its BlackBerry 10 operating system.

The Waterloo, Ont.-based company says the software helps government and business employees use mobile devices of their choice with lower security risks.

The certification will give security-conscious organizations, like U.S. and Canadian government agencies, the ability to use software which separates sensitive corporate data from personal content on a single mobile device.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Airbag issue

Nissan recalls 60,000 vehicles in Canada

Nissan is recalling about 60,000 cars, SUVs and minivans in Canada because the front passenger airbags may not inflate in a crash.

The announcement is part of a broader recall of just over 1 million cars, SUVs and minivans across North America by the automaker. It's the company's second recall to fix the same problem.

The recall affects almost 990,000 vehicles in the U.S. and small numbers elsewhere. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Voice biometrics

Can't recall passwords? Use your voice

With passwords and PINs increasingly being targeted by hackers, speaking could become a new method to access secure accounts.

Voice biometrics — technology that knows who you are based on your voice characteristics — is already being used by banks and telecom companies globally for better security, says Brett Beranek of software company Nuance Communications.

"Our voices are unique to us, just like our DNA or our fingerprints or our iris," says Beranek, a solutions marketing manager.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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I SURRENDER, MOTHER NATURE

HE SAYS

John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

OK, winter, I give up.

Forget discontent. This is the winter of our disbelief.

Mother Nature went from her usual fickle and frigid self to full-on cruel and cold-hearted. Bing Crosby's White Christmas gave way long ago to Game of Thrones' Winter Without End. Jack Frost bit my nose off and spat it in my face.

We were once in a snow globe, but now we're trapped Under the Dome, scratching at the glass and screaming for anyone to let us out.

As I write this, the Maritimes is being hit with the sort of storm that usually gives rise to over-the-top, two-word blends like polar vortex, frostquake or snowpocalypse. By the time you read this, the blizzard may well be known as a Sleet Scream, The Parthenon Freeze or Icetrocity 2014.

Meanwhile, in Toronto, it's been cold for so long that my friends and I are deeply excited that the forecast for the week includes such mercies as 10 degrees and rainy, which will give us at least one day to dream that we're Vancouverites adrift in a warmish sea of cappuccinos and cannabis.

(This column is least relevant for Vancouver residents, but just replace the word "snow" with "rain," the word "cold" with "drab" and the words "We're all in this together" with "Get bent.")

The predicted improvement from insufferable weather to unpleasant weather had given me hope that things were improving, but then I saw a new headline on Wednesday: "WINTER-LIKE WEATHER TO CONTINUE UNTIL AT LEAST MID-APRIL."

It's funny how your eyes play tricks on you, because when I first glanced at the headline I read it as "LEAP FROM THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY." I thought about it, but figured the snow would probably break my fall anyway.

Which leads me back to my original thought: I give up. I have no more rage, no more despair to give. The tears only freeze on my face. The seven-day forecast has pushed me through the seven stages of grief and it's time to accept my frosty fate.

I accept that it's going to be winter forever. And I for one welcome our new, flakey overlords.

Why, winter year-round will be grand.

Patio weather will be any time we want, there'll be no annoying change of car tires, no suffering through another bus-stop simpleton asking, "Hot enough for ya?"

Hockey in June will make perfect sense, the cars-versus-bikes feud will end, and a balaclava will provide all the SPF protection you need.

No smog, no humidity, no insects. No summer love means no summer heartbreaks.

Endless winter will mean being comfortably numb, with smiles frozen on our faces.

I give up, winter. You win. I am yours, and you're all right.

A naysayer might claim I have Stockholm syndrome, but I checked. It's 14 and sunny there.

Uncle, Mother Nature. Uncle.

ZOOM

10,000-calorie, beastly burger

Substantial sandwich inspired by a cartoon

The 10,000-calorie whopper, dubbed the Ulti-Meatum, was cooked up by restaurant owners Corinne and John Clarkson after seeing the meat feast on Cartoon Network's The Regular Show.

The monster meal includes five pounds (2.2 kilograms) of meat and a cheeseburger within a burger just like in the children's animation. The owners of the Mister Eaters fish and chips restaurant in Preston, England, are offering up a man-versus-food challenge where daring punters can eat for free if they can finish the burger in one sitting. METRO

TWITTER:@TORGANDELLIOTT

Q & A with John Clarkson, one of the creators

Special plate needed to hold it

Was this as much a personal challenge as anything else?
Yeah, I enjoy it and it's a bit of fun. I'm a butcher by trade and I'm familiar with meat and how it sticks together, so I thought I'll have a go. We've done the world's biggest deep-fried Ferrero Rocher at 11 pounds (five kilograms) in weight and that went global, so I thought I could do the same with this. It gets people talking; the shop's been overwhelmed.

Did you have any problems building the burger?
We had three or four flops. I had to design a plate with pins that are the same height as the burger, so that it doesn't topple over. The thing with my burger is that it's not messy when you cut it open — you get a really nice cross-section as you can see in the picture.

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

The Oculus Rift VR helmet's splashy debut on the tech conference circuit helped make it one of the most successful Kickstarters of all time, eventually leading to Facebook's $2B purchase of Oculus on Tuesday. So it looks like VR is about ready to become a thing, and these movies available on Netflix will provide a nice glimpse of the nightmarish future it will usher in.

The Oculus Rift virtual reality headset THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

eXistenz:
Jennifer Jason Leigh and Jude Law star as a video game designer and her protégé who flit between virtual worlds while avoiding assassins determined to hunt them down in this sci-fi brain bender from David Cronenberg. It's truly weird and wonderful.

Strange Days:
A gem lying among the junk of mid-'90s cyber-paranoia flicks, the Kathryn Bigelow-directed Strange Days is the story of a former cop who stumbles across a high-profile murder among his collection of virtual reality clips, wrapping him up in a manhunt across an L.A. that has disintegrated into a war zone as the calendar heads toward the year 2000.

Evolver:
Here is where we veer decidedly into B-movie territory when an elite gamer gets a chance to play a live version of his favourite video game. Naturally, this leads to big, violent problems when he finds himself battling a ruthlessly efficient killer robot.

Twitter

@metropicks asked: A US$297 course called conscious uncoupling promises a happy breakup. Would you pay?

@Canucklehead_ca: Why pay to have the cow sent back to pasture when you can simply give up milk for free?

@prussell_pc: I have paid .. far more. This program takes two to un-tango, and so wouldn't have worked for me.

@AnyaZub: That's like four bottles of whiskey,cover charge and two rounds at the bar for me and two of my best friends.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

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Send us your comments: torontoletters@metronews.ca

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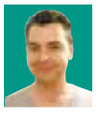
SCENE 2

A night at the museum

ROM Prom. Organizers expect 1,000 guests dressed in their very finest for this year's Forbidden edition



BACKSTAGE PASS
Ian Gormely
scene@metronews.ca

If museums are all about examining the past to better understand our present, what does the Royal Ontario Museum hope we learn from a prom?

Why, how to get down on a dance floor, of course.

The Royal Ontario Museum's annual ROM Prom has become a staple social event for young 20- and 30-somethings looking for chance to cut a rug while supporting one of the city's cultural gems.

The event was originally hatched by the ROM's Young Patrons Circle. "They felt nostalgia for their prom," says Denise Dias, director of marketing and communications with the ROM Governors. "They wanted a big dance party."

Now in its ninth year, Prom's expected 1000 guests pump about $100,000 into the museum's coffers, money that goes to the "highest priority" projects, like new exhibits or education programs.

But it's also become the ROM's premiere event aimed at millennials who might not otherwise seek out the space.

"It's an opportunity to get people into the museum, people who may not normally come to the ROM."

Although the event is similar in concept to the ROM's monthly Friday Night Live series, ROM Prom carries a greater sense of occasion, says Dias.

The museum literally rolls out the red carpet for guests, many of whom come dressed to the nines in tuxedos and dresses.

"There's more of a fashion element to it," she says. "Friday Night Live is more casual."

Cocktails and DJs aside, ROM Prom still stays true the museum's original mandate of showcasing natural history and world cultures.

This year's event has been dubbed Forbidden Prom to coincide with the current Forbidden City exhibition and a number of the museum's curators will be on hand to talk shop; VIP ticket holders get a guided tour of the exhibit.

Forbidden Prom – 9 p.m., Saturday at the Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park. Regular tickets are $150. CONTRIBUTED

Party hard, learn stuff

"It is a great dance party, but beyond that people can meet our experts."
Denise Dias, director of marketing and communications with ROM Governors

Forbidden treats

Taking over the museum's main floor and rotunda, this year's Forbidden Prom guests can expect a number of themed treats to go along with food and drink covered by their ticket.

- Access to the Forbidden City exhibit
- Access to the ROM's Chinese Architecture exhibit
- Chinese astrology readings
- A tea and cheese cocktail bar
- Dim sum
- Oolong-infused cocktails
- Photo booth area
- See rom.on.ca/prom for full details

SHOPPERS DRUG MART
SEE WHAT'S NEW... CHECK OUT OUR LATEST OFFER ON PAGE 26

The life and times of a Bomb Girl

For two seasons, actress Charlotte Hegele immersed herself in the life of Second World War munitions factory worker Kate Andrews on the series Bomb Girl.

While her character grew on the series — breaking away from her authoritarian father and dealing with rumours of her "unnatural" love for fellow munitions worker Betty — so too did Hegele's knowledge of the period.

With the TV movie Bomb Girls: Facing the Enemy airing Thursday at 8 p.m. ET/PT on Global, we asked Hegele to tell us what she learned about the era in her role as Kate. METRO

Charlotte Hegele plays Kate Andrews in Bomb Girls.
CONTRIBUTED

Women's roles in war were dangerous, too

Before working on Bomb Girls I never knew the crucial role Canadian women played during the Second World War.

In school I only ever learned about how men bravely fought on the front lines. But it was the women back home who made the ammunition those Canadian soldiers used to win the war.

It was a dangerous job that paved the way for later generations of women to work in an industrial setting. It was a hazardous workplace and those women stepped up to the task.

'Their stories gave me goosebumps.'

I was given the opportunity to meet the women from that era and hear first-hand their accounts of the Second World War.

From building bombs, to cracking German codes, to serving overseas, these women did it all. Their stories gave me goosebumps.

I'll never forget how incredible those women were, and still are.

Movies, music and fashion in wartime

Working on Bomb Girls, I was immersed in 1940s culture.

I learned hit songs sung by Vera Lynn, Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday. I watched movies like Alfred Hitchcock's Suspicion (1941) and Saboteur.

Fashion was transformed by wartime rationing. Hemlines got shorter. Stocking seams were drawn up women's legs to fake the real thing. Movie stars like Veronica Lake styled their hair into up-dos to encourage safe practices on factory production lines. The war changed everything.

It's all about the girls

In the film and television industry there is an unwritten rule that promotes the idea that audiences would prefer to see stories centred around men rather than women.

Bomb Girls proves this wrong. On Bomb Girls I got to work with some of the most talented and passionate women in the business like Adrienne Mitchell, Janis Lundman, Anne Wheeler, Rachel Talalay, and of course Meg Tilly.

These women shaped me into being both a better performer and a stronger person. I can't thank them enough.

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Crowe takes on role of biblical proportions

Noah. Actor's latest flick renews the tradition of mass audience Bible epics — with a distinctly darker feel

Director Darren Aronofsky, left, and actor Russell Crowe on the set of Noah. NIKO TAVERNISE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

At the beginning of their work together on Noah, director Darren Aronofsky made Russell Crowe a promise: "I'll never shoot you on a houseboat in a robe and sandals with two giraffes popping up behind you."

Decades after Cecil B. DeMille's The Ten Commandments and Ben-Hur, Aronofsky has renewed the tradition of the studio-made, mass audience Bible epic, albeit as a distinctly darker parable about sin, justice and mercy. While much of his Noah is true to Scripture, it's nothing like the picture-book version many encounter as children.

"The first time I read it, I got scared," the director says. "I thought, 'What if I'm not good enough to get on the boat?'"

It's an altogether unlikely project: a $130-million Bible-based studio film made by a widely respected filmmaker (Black Swan, Requiem for a Dream) few would have pegged as a modern-day DeMille. In the lead-up to its March 28th release, Noah has been flooded by controversy, with some religious conservatives claiming it isn't literal enough to the Old Testament and that Noah has been inaccurately made, as Aronofsky has called him, "the first environmentalist."

Noah is a culmination of the shift brought on by Mel Gibson's independently produced The Passion of the Christ, which awakened Hollywood with its unforeseen $612 million box office haul in 2004. In the time since, Hollywood has carefully developed closer ties to faith-based communities, (Sony and 20th Century Fox have set up faith-based studios targeting evangelicals).

Mass appeal

"It's wrong when you talk about the Noah story to talk about it in that type of believer-nonbeliever way because I think it's one of humanity's oldest stories. ... Everyone on the planet knows the Noah story."

Director Darren Aronofsky

Yet the debate about Noah proves that it can be tricky to satisfy both believers and nonbelievers, and that finding the right intersection of art, commerce and religion is a task loaded with as much risk as potential reward.

A lot is at stake, and not just for Noah and distributor Paramount Pictures. In December, Fox will release Ridley Scott's Exodus, starring Christian Bale as Moses.

On the heels of the recently released Son of God, the religious drama God's Not Dead opened last Friday and Sony is releasing the less straightforwardly biblical Heaven Is for Real ahead of Easter next month. The studio is also developing a vampire twist on Cain and Able with Will Smith. In Lionsgate's pipeline is a Mary Magdalene film, hyped as a prequel to The Passion of the Christ and co-produced by megachurch pastor Joel Osteen.

When Jonathan Boch started his company Grace Hill Media in 2000 to consult Hollywood studios on reaching the faith community, the two "really didn't know each other."

Though Hollywood largely swore off the Bible epic when films like 1965's The Greatest Story Ever Told flopped, the revival dovetails recent trends. Figures like Noah are globally recognizable, and thus easier to market. They come with no licensing fee, and, often, plenty opportunity for flashy special effects. Noah, which is being released in converted 3D overseas, is perhaps the oldest apocalypse story.

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Three Days in Havana takes 25 years

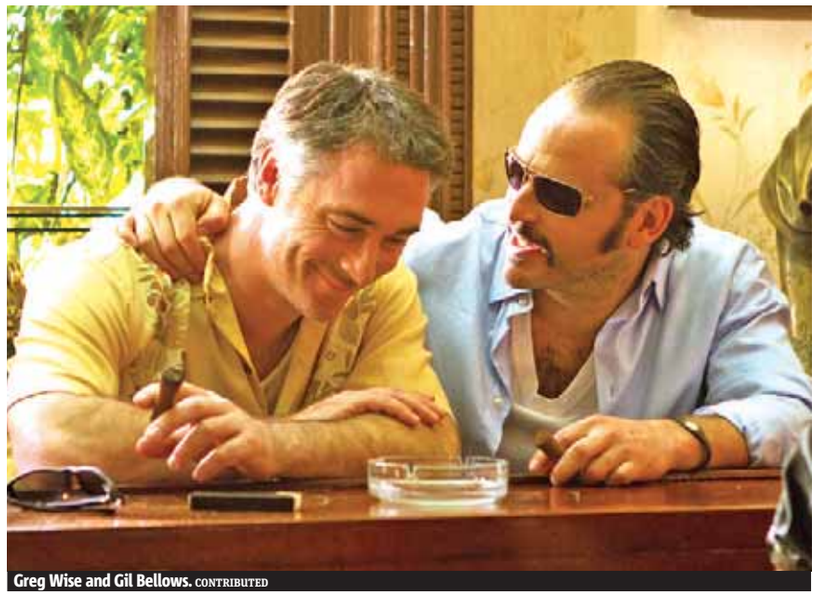
New film. Drama filmed in Cuba was quarter of a century in the making

STEVE GOW
scene@metronews.ca

In Gil Bellows' new drama Three Days in Havana, Cuba plays as much a character as the Canadian actor's ill-fated protagonist.

"What a beautiful, dynamic place to be," said Bellows from Los Angeles. "What prompted us to tell this kind of story was to put a character in an environment that would feel foreign to him and to an audience and make it take on this personality of its own so it could be mysterious and sexy and comical."

Reminiscent of the suspense-filled films of Alfred Hitchcock, the movie tells the tale of an insurance executive who heads to Havana only to find himself embroiled in a mysterious murder plot after meeting an ebullient but evasive writer in the Cuban capital.



Greg Wise and Gil Bellows. CONTRIBUTED

"We went twice to scout (and) found all our locations, our actors, all the good places to eat and good places to listen to music and hang out," said Bellows who co-wrote and co-directed the film with creative partner Tony Pantages. "We tried to squeeze every ounce of our experience and put it into the film."

In essence, Three Days in Havana took nearly a quarter of a century to bring to the big screen. Pantages and Bellows (who may best be recognized for his role on TV's Ally McBeal) first decided to make a movie when both were still struggling actors. After finding inspiration with this story in 2010, the pair took the unusual strategy of writing a treatment to send to 10 different writers to interpret their own version.

"Ultimately we shaped and carved and rewrote but it gave us the opportunity to mine and tap into the imaginations and creativity of a bunch of people who we wanted to work with," said Bellows. "We (wanted this to be) both the celebration of 25 years of friendship and at the same time the grand experiment — and that part of it *was* a grand experiment."

Quoted

"What prompted us to tell this kind of story was to put a character in an environment that would feel foreign to him and to an audience and make it take on this personality of its own so it could be mysterious and sexy and comical."

Actor and director Gil Bellows

Bellows on:

- **His inspirations:** "The Coen Brothers, (Alfred) Hitchcock, (Michael-angelo) Antonioni. Those were the three big ones."
- **Directing:** "I've sort of toyed with directing a few different times and I like it. I definitely want to incorporate the opportunity to do it a few more times with some stories I'm eager to do."

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Who is eligible to participate?
- Children up to 16 years of age who were exposed to maternal chemotherapy and/or surgery for breast cancer during pregnancy.
- The child's parents or primary care providers

What is involved in the study?
- Children will undergo a non-invasive physical examination and neuropsychological testing (IQ testing).
- Parents or care providers will answer questionnaires related to their child's health and behaviour.

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Judd Apatow and Lena Dunham

Apatow admits Girls could have been a lot more graphic

While Lena Dunham's hit HBO series Girls has often been criticized for how far it goes as far as sexual content, producer Judd Apatow reveals that apparently they've wanted to go even farther. "There have been things on Girls where HBO has said to us, 'If we put this on TV, we literally could lose our license to broadcast," Apatow told a group of college students at an event in Los Angeles, according to the New York Post. "Let's just say it's something you see in adult film — elements of sexual intercourse. The high points of sexual intercourse." Maybe they can save that for the DVD.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

That's so tweet: Martin and Paltrow make peace with a painting

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

What should a sensitive GOOP-ified husband do to comfort his soon-to-be-ex-beloved in their time of conscious uncoupling? Put a bird on it, of course.

Chris Martin and Gwyneth Paltrow are clearly making an effort to ensure that even their divorce is expensive and classy. Apparently Coldplay front man Martin even bought Paltrow a parting gift — an etching of a bird by Polish artist Mila Fürstová, created as cover art for a Coldplay album, a source told the Daily Mail.

"The fighting is over now, there's no bitterness. They're actually going to have some fun," the source said.

There's the picture above. It's pretty cool and the sort of thing that Chris Martin and Gwyneth Paltrow would have in their living room.

It seems unfair that even their divorce is cooler than me. Or maybe not: Mila Fürstová's staff denies that Chris Martin bought one of her works "as a gift or for any other reason."

Selena, stop hitting repeat-peat-peat on that relationship: Parents

Selena Gomez ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Selena Gomez's parents are reportedly gearing up for another intervention for the former Disney star, hoping a return trip to rehab and distance from on-again, off-again boyfriend Justin Bieber will get her back on the straight and narrow, according to Life & Style Weekly. Their last attempts to convince Gomez to seek help for anxiety and alleged substance abuse issues went well, with Gomez voluntarily checking into the Meadows treatment facility in Arizona — but she checked herself out two weeks later to rush to Bieber's side in the wake of his legal troubles. And she's been spotted with the troubled Canadian pop star regularly since then, most recently this past weekend in L.A. when she stopped by the Sunset Towers Hotel for a quick visit with Bieber. Sources tell the magazine that Gomez's parents want her to ditch Bieber for good and head back to Meadows to complete her six-week program.

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

Getaway can help renew your mood

The trick with weekend getaways is figuring out precisely what you want from your wee vacation.

Looking for giggles in the sun with a few girlfriends? Or perhaps you are more in the mood for the nightlife and culinary adventures of New York City? Has work kept you so swamped you feel the need to reconnect with parents and kids? Or are you missing the loving embrace of your partner? Maybe a romantic weekend getaway is in store.

Any which way, be clear about what it is you are seeking as you approach the long Easter weekend, says Jo Allan, marketing director for Intercontinental Hotels Group, a large multinational with more than 4,600 hotels worldwide.

"A good place to begin is by asking yourself what kind of feeling you want to accomplish with your getaway or what it is you need," Allan said.

Once you have decided on what mood you want to set, you will want to look at a budget. Will a Las Vegas fantasy suite or a rejuvenating spa package at a luxurious country inn suit you? If you are travelling with kids, parents or extended family members, finances may be a factor, so you may want to consider accommodations that offer free breakfasts, free dining for kids or rooms that have kitchen facilities that cut down on your overall food bill.

"Given the winter we've had many will be looking to bring on spring," Allan said. "Vacationers might want to look for something with a pool."

And don't forget your technology. Whether that's for mapping out a spontaneous trip to Quebec or finding hotels near the Parliament Buildings or checking the reviews of a roadside burger joint, your smartphone is a great portable resource for those on the go. **KELLY PUTTER**

Time to put a spring in your step

New season. Activities that will make you forget the long winter we have endured

KELLY PUTTER
For Metro

As we usher in spring don't let the cool weather and threat of flurries dampen your enthusiasm for outdoor fun in the sun.

The warm weather is coming. That's a promise.

Ease your atrophied muscles back to health with an outdoor exercise regime that blends fresh air and fitness. Try an outdoor yoga class or boot camp. Find your favourite public space and work out using just your body weight as resistance for squats, lunges or push-ups. Take a hike. Go for a run or just amble along.

Shopping outdoors is almost as good as retail therapy gets. Open-air markets, street vendors and yard sales all signal warmer weather. Outdoor farmers' markets, in which growers, foodies and artisans promote the freshness and quality of their wares, are back in full swing. If you are on a tight budget, try some old-fashioned window shopping instead.

Take the family out for a hike for some outdoor exercise. GOODLUZ/SHUTTERSTOCK

Hone your green thumb. Use garden apps such as Garden Squared or Into Gardens to plan for the upcoming growing season. Start seeds indoors to get plants hale and hearty for summer's sun. In an effort to encourage bees that have been mysteriously disappearing lately, grow bee-friendly plants such as primrose, crocus and lavender. Take a Sunday drive to your nearest orchard to visit the blossoms. Consider growing heirloom varieties of vegetables for your summer salads. And don't forget to compost.

Let's chew on the fact that nearly everything is better when done outdoors and that means eating, too. Whether dining on your favourite terrace, pop-up patio or from a food truck or street vendor, food and fresh air are two ingredients that create the perfect summer pastime. Bring on picnics, backyard barbecues, fairs and drive-ins, all awesome al fresco eating venues when the nicer weather arrives.

New outlook

- Ease back slowly into exercise if you have taken a winter sabbatical.
- Clean and purify your diet, your cosmetics bag, your gym bag and your home.
- Revamp your wardrobe.
- Consider a new hairstyle or colour.
- Have your vehicle, motorcycle or bike tuned up.
- Book a cottage or plan a summer holiday.

Regrowth. Dig into these seasonal ideas

SHARON DEVELLIS
YummyMummyClub.ca

Even though the weather may not feel like spring, here are a few ways to celebrate the new season.

Start your seeds

With snow on the ground you probably aren't thinking of your garden just yet, but now is the perfect time to start seeds. Typically, you want to start your seeds six to eight weeks before the expected last frost date in your area.

Think about planting seeds now so they will be ready to transfer to your garden.
MONKEY BUSINESS IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK

Begin spring cleaning

This is the perfect time to get a jump-start on your spring cleaning. Open windows to air out your house, tackle the baseboards, dust the top of light fixtures and do all the other stuff you have been putting off all winter.

Put a bird feeder in your yard

The birds will soon be returning from their trek down south. Welcome them with a bird feeder or bird house.

Buy some flowers

Nothing says spring like fresh flowers. Treat yourself to a bouquet that will brighten your day without wilting your wallet. Or better yet, buy a plant in a pot that you can plant outdoors when the weather is nice.

Eat spring produce

Start with green — asparagus, fiddleheads, and peas — then add colour with radishes and rhubarb.

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Fashion, at its purest, is about telling stories. And the best storytellers are ones with tales to tell themselves. Here, we look at five individuals making waves in the Canadian fashion industry while weaving their own experiences into the mix.

SIGRID FORBERG
life@metronews.ca

5 who stitched their story into a style career

Nana Osei

Designer, Bôhten Eyeglasses Inc.

It was on a trip to Ghana in 2009 that Nana Osei saw an opportunity to combine his passions for social responsibility and fashion. While still in university in Ottawa, he created Bôhten Eyeglasses Inc. The lightweight eyewear, made of reclaimed wood from West Africa and handcrafted in zero-waste facilities in Canada, have been drawing national attention. He's even appeared on the Dragon's Den. In the future, Osei hopes to bring the manufacturing to Africa as well. "People say there's nothing you can do about some things, but I say it always just starts small," says Osei.

Meredith Wright

Filmmaker, Agency

After modelling for several years around the world, and being turned off by the way models were treated everywhere she went, Wright wanted to expose some of the darker sides of the industry. The end result was Agency, a documentary about young girls working for a modelling agency in Japan. Shot through Wright's own perspective, living in an apartment with fellow models in Osaka, Japan, the film aims to get people asking questions about the industry they normally wouldn't. "If I told someone that underage girls were working with no representation, they would be upset," says Wright. "So why is it OK when it's for fashion?"

Lolitta Dandoy

Blogger, Fashion is Everywhere

With a mix of French and English posts on Fashion is Everywhere, Dandoy is the quintessential Montrealer. As a fashion journalist, she'd always wanted to start her own publication. Faced with a cancer diagnosis several years ago, while convalescing at home, she decided to go for it. Surrounded by so much creativity in Montreal, she tries to capture an awareness in her blog that the fashion community *is* in fact a community and has a greater meaning beyond superficial consumerism. "When somebody doesn't feel right in their skin, a lot of that can have to do with their appearance," says Dandoy. "It can change things you don't expect."

Julia Che

President, Lotus Leaf Communications

After studying fashion communications at Ryerson University, Che was working in public relations in Toronto when she noticed a friend, who is a talented jewelry designer, needed help promoting her product. Thus, Lotus Leaf Communications was born. They now represent big-name clients like 7 For All Mankind, Dr. Martens and Manitobah Mukluks. And while they've grown exponentially from that first client, at the end of the day, Che has used the company's success to give back to the community, "Agents of Change is a branch of Lotus Leaf," says Che. "Through it, we can use our expertise to increase awareness about social issues."

Jigme Nehring

Founder, Mine & Yours

After living in Los Angeles, where the buy-sell-trade concept is common, Jigme Nehring decided to bring the model to Vancouver. Her resale shop, Mine & Yours is a place where women can purchase, sell or trade their gently used clothing. Nehring emphasizes the business's aspect of giving women the chance to recycle and find good homes for items that might otherwise collect dust in the back of their closets. The trouble with the fashion industry, Nehring explains, is the amount of waste it produces, which the shop aims to help negate as much as possible. "Mine & Yours helps reduce waste by extending the life of great pieces that are still in style and encouraging people to buy used clothing over new," says Nehring.

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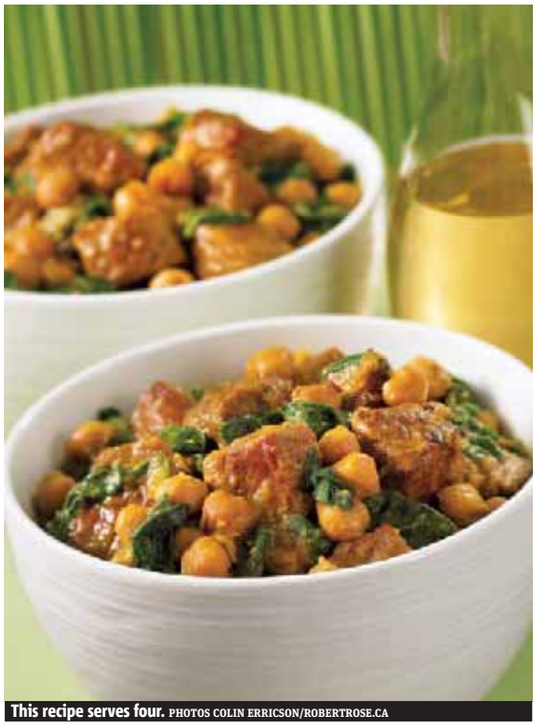
Slow cooker meal's protein punch



This recipe serves four. PHOTOS COLIN ERRICSON/ROBERTROSE.CA

Beef and Chickpea Curry with Spinach.

The Indian-inspired flavours will have your taste buds doing a happy dance

"This combination of beef and chickpeas in an Indian-inspired sauce is particularly delicious. I like to serve this with brown basmati rice, not only because I like its pleasant nutty flavor but also for its nutritional value," writes Judith Finalyson in her book The Healthy Slow Cooker, Second Edition. "This is a generous serving (almost 2 cups/500 mL) so there will be more than enough to fill you up."

1. In a skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add beef, in batches, and cook, stirring, adding additional oil if necessary, until browned, about 4 minutes per batch. Transfer to slow cooker stoneware.

2. Reduce heat to medium. Add onions to pan and cook, stirring, until softened, about 3 minutes. Add garlic, ginger, peppercorns, cinnamon stick and bay leaf and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add beef stock and bring to a boil.

3. Transfer to slow cooker stoneware. Add chickpeas and stir well. Cover and cook on Low for 8 hours or on High for 4 hours, until beef is tender. Add curry powder solution and stir well. Add spinach, in batches, stirring until each batch is submerged in the curry. Cover and cook on High for 20 minutes, until spinach is wilted. Discard cinnamon stick and bay leaf. Ladle into bowls and drizzle with yogurt, if using.

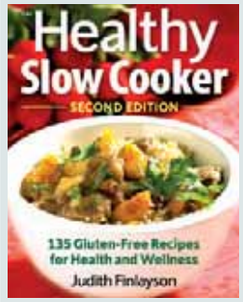
RECIPES COURTESY THE HEALTHY SLOW COOKER, SECOND EDITION BY JUDITH FINLAYSON, 2014 © ROBERTROSE.CA REPRINTED WITH PUBLISHER PERMISSION.

Ingredients and Tools

- Medium to large (3 1/2 to 5 quart) slow cooker
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 lb (500 g) trimmed stewing beef, cut into 1/2-inch (1 cm) cubes
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) minced gingerroot
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) cracked black peppercorns
- 1 piece (1 inch/2.5 cm) cinnamon stick
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup (250 ml) beef stock
- 2 cups (500 ml) cooked chickpeas, drained
- 1 tsp (5 ml) curry powder, dissolved in 2 tsp (10 ml) freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 lb (500 g) fresh spinach, stems removed
- 1 package (10 oz/300 g) spinach leaves, thawed if frozen
- Plain yogurt, optional

Cookbook of the Week

Slow and steady wins health race



In the follow-up to the first edition of The Healthy Slow Cooker, Judith Finlayson takes conflicting information about the changing face of dietary guidelines and balances it with a common-sense approach.

All the recipes in the book are deliciously nutrient-dense and have a rounded approach to meet a wide range of needs.

From soups and entrées to desserts, Finlayson uses the slow cooker to show readers how simple healthy eating can be.

METRO

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Appetizer. Spinach and Artichoke Dip

1. In slow cooker stoneware, combine shredded mozzarella, Neufchâtel cheese, Parmesan, garlic, artichokes, spinach and black pepper. Cover and cook on High for 2 hours, until hot and bubbly. Stir well and serve with homemade tortilla chips.

Ingredients and Tools

- Small to medium (11/2 to 31/2 quart) slow cooker
- 1 cup (250 ml) shredded mozzarella cheese
- 6 oz (175 ml) Neufchâtel cheese, cubed
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) freshly grated Parmesan
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 can (14 oz/398 ml) artichokes, drained, rinsed and finely chopped
- 8 oz (250 g) trimmed fresh spinach leaves (about 8 cups/2 L)
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) black pepper

This recipe makes about 3 cups (750 ml).

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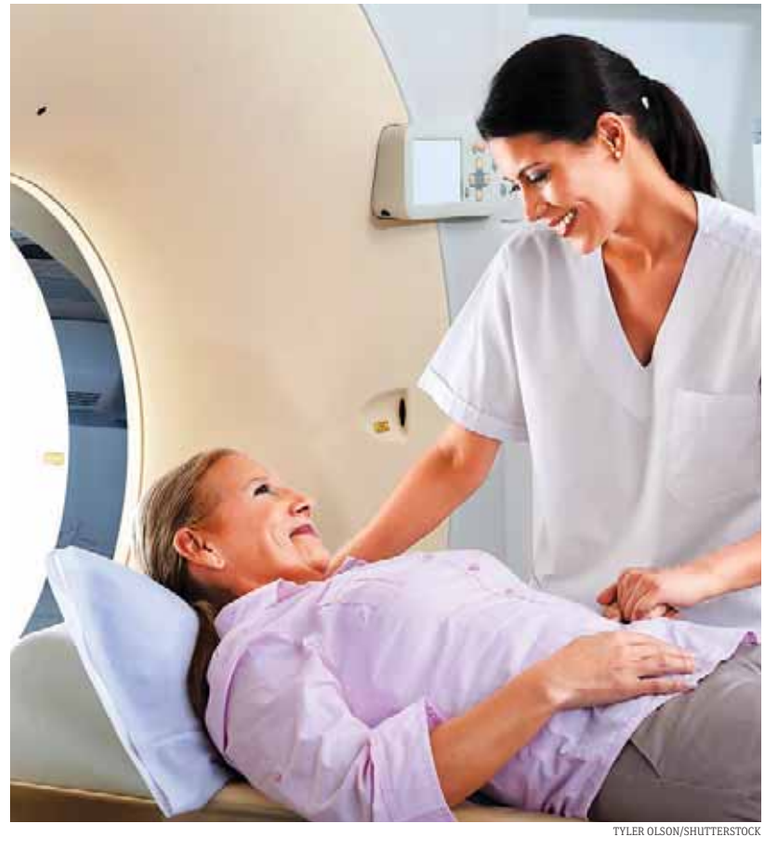
DAILY CHALLENGES OF LIVING WITH CANCER

INCLUDING ACCESS TO NEW TREATMENTS



TYLER OLSON/SHUTTERSTOCK

As Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month draws to a close, relatively little attention has been paid to the thousands of Canadians who are living with advanced colon cancer.

Although these patients add their voices as advocates of screening and primary prevention, they are also faced with the daily challenges of obtaining access to new drugs to treat their disease and manage their symptoms. Timely access to these therapies can greatly affect the quality of life and a patient's ability to prolong it.

"I speak to patients with very advanced cancer daily and I believe there is a false perception that these individuals are always bedridden and incredibly sick," says Barry D. Stein, president of the Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada (CCAC). "In many cases today, if you were to meet someone with advanced colon cancer, you might not even know they were ill."

These patients want to extend their lives and maximize the quality of time they will have with their family and friends. There has been tremendous progress in developing such treatments but there are issues around accessing them. Access also varies across Canada.

The provincial and territorial ministries of health formed the pan-Canadian Oncology Drug Review (pCODR) group in 2010 to ensure a balanced review of newly approved cancer treatments by asking oncology specialists and impartial patient representatives to make recommendations to provincial formularies with regard to the funding of new oncology drugs.

"In principal, pCODR is a good thing," Stein says. "The challenge is that it appears too much emphasis is being placed on economics and not enough on the personal impact of new medicines. Negative decisions on funding greatly impact patients with advanced disease who still have time to live, but are being denied public funding for new and effective treatment options."

"I continue to manage my cancer on a daily basis and I am a huge proponent of awareness to prevent cancer through screening, but I see a huge gap when it comes to public awareness about lack of access to new treatment options," says Stephen Dunn of Toronto. "I know for myself and other patients in a similar situation we simply cannot accept decisions about life-extending treatments based purely on economics."

The Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada is taking the lead to escalate the "access" discussion with Canadians so they understand the nuances of funding new drugs and how important public funding is to patients with advanced cancer.

For more information on the ongoing access issue or to get involved, visit colorectal-cancer.ca.

BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE AND MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Tina Radoslav

CONTRIBUTED

You would never know by seeing her at the gym during her daily workout, but Tina Radoslav of Stoney Creek, is living with metastatic colon cancer.

An active, optimistic single mother of three, she is not the image of a patient with advanced cancer most Canadians call to mind.

Five and a half years ago, Radoslav was diagnosed with Stage 4, or metastatic, colon cancer. That day changed everything in her life.

"I was leaving the doctor's office with my mom and saying to her … 'I can't do this.' Mom replied, 'You can do this, you will do this!'"

An advanced cancer diagnosis has presented challenges for Radoslav beyond her health. Her husband of 25 years left their marriage 18 months into her cancer journey. Her employer let Radoslav go because it was not prepared to deal with her diagnosis and the time off she would need for treatments. Her life has changed, but, in her own words, she is "still alive."

Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada

"Be your own advocate," Radoslav tells newly diagnosed patients.

She knows this is hard when they are also coming to terms with their diagnoses, but it is essential.

"You are in the battle of your lifetime. Our health-care system is great if you are dealing with a common illness. It doesn't work as well when you are dealing with an advanced form of cancer.

"Metastatic cancer is not a one-size-fits-all disease. Some options stop working or don't work as well on one patient as they do on another. We suffer when we cannot access all the treatments and protocols that can benefit us. Sometimes it feels as if patients living with cancer are just looked upon as an economic burden to the system. I strongly believe you cannot put a price tag on a life and I am sure my children would agree."

As Colon Cancer Awareness month comes to a close, Radoslav wants Canadians newly diagnosed with advanced disease to get the support they need. She wants them to make their voices heard.

"Make sure you are aware of the treatment options possible. Talk to your health-care team. Advocate to the government to make new treatments available. I have had to fight for treatments, and everyday I am thankful to be here."

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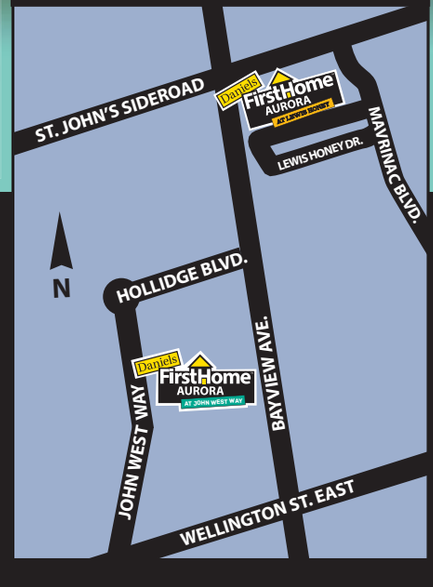

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Developer partners with Habitat for Humanity

Pair of condo units contributed. Immigrant family welcomed to new home in Cinema Towers

CONDO TRENDS
Duncan McAllister
life@metronews.ca

Habitat for Humanity has been getting into the condo market recently. Last April, Habitat partnered with Diamond Corp., developer of the 35-storey, 159 Wellesley condominium project with eight new suites of affordable downtown housing.

Habitat for Humanity Toronto is a non-profit housing organization established in 1988 with a primary mission to build simple and affordable homes in partnership with low-income families. More than 20,000 volunteers contribute almost 100,000 hours of their time and talent to Habitat each year.

Last week, Habitat and the Daniels Corporation celebrated the contribution of two condominium units in the city's newest landmark residence, Cinema Tower. The key exchange and dedication ceremony marked a new beginning for the first partner family, the Zhang-Min family, and was held at the Cinema Tower residence. "We are deeply appreciative of our ongoing partnership with Daniels," says Ene Underwood, CEO of Habitat for Humanity Toronto. "The Cinema Tower project is a great example of how innovative partnerships can push the boundaries of affordable housing,"

This will make all the difference to the Zhang-Min family, who are thrilled about owning a home. Originally from China, Frank, his wife Ping, and fourteen year-old daughter Alice moved to Canada in 2005, hoping to provide a better future for their daughter. Since then, they have been struggling to get by. Due to high rental costs they were forced to live in a basement apartment of a small, semi-detached house.

Daniels has been a longtime supporter and partner for Habitat for Humanity affiliates throughout the GTA. In 2008, Daniels donated land for the construction of 10 Habitat homes in Etobicoke, the single largest donation of land by a private company in Habitat Canada's history. Currently, Daniels' Vice President Martin Blake is serving as chair of the Habitat for Humanity Toronto Board of Directors.

"Habitat for Humanity Toronto means a lot to us at Daniels, and we have a long and strong history with the organization." says Niall Haggart, Daniels' EVP. "Today marks yet another milestone in our affiliation, and is validation once again that we share your organization's dedication to helping families find places they can call home that are within their financial reach."

Just steps away from the TIFF Bell Lightbox, Cinema Tower is located in the epicentre of Toronto's film, art and cultural scene. "Together with Habitat we are demonstrating that affordable housing can be achieved," added Haggard, "and we are thrilled to welcome the Zhang-Min family home to Cinema Tower."

An artist's rendering of the lobby of the Cinema Tower residence. CONTRIBUTED

Quoted

"Together with Habitat we are demonstrating that affordable housing can be achieved, and we are thrilled to welcome the Zhang-Min family home to Cinema Tower."

Niall Haggart, Executive Vice President, The Daniels corporation

Sean Gadon, left, Toronto's Director of Affordable Housing; Frank Zhang, father; Ene Underwood, CEO, Habitat for Humanity; Ping Min, mother; Alice, daughter; Niall Haggart, Executive Vice President, The Daniels Corporation. CONTRIBUTED

Legal Matters

Closed versus open mortgages

I am getting some extra financing from a mortgage broker who is using a private lender. He is using terms such as closed and open financing. What is the difference?

LEGAL MATTERS
Jeffrey Cowan
home@metronews.ca

Most mortgages that you obtain from financial institutions are closed, meaning you can't pay them out without some form of the penalty. This is also the case with private financing deals.

The lender wants to be put in a position whereby they would earn the interest they had otherwise counted on when they forwarded the funds.

An open mortgage allows you to pay off the loan at any time without penalty and interest. Typically, fixed mortgages are at lower interest rates because they provide the lender with greater certainty.

Open mortgages can garner higher rates because you have the flexibility of paying back the loan at any time.

Often in private financing deals, you can find that a loan is closed for an initial period of time and then it becomes open to repayment.

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Conversation-starter table toppers

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

What goes on top of the books on the coffee table? Here are a few on-trend pieces designed to charm guests

Set the scene

The coffee table is the centre of attention in any living room. Not only does it offer a place to set a martini (or a slew of TV converters) but also tells guests a bit about you. Your interests can easily be seen in the types of books you read or the style of accessories on display. Here are some ideas to add caché.

Add sparkle with a shape-shifter

Chiselled and oblique-shaped golden tea-light holder changes its shape from all views. GlucksteinHome Sydney Large Tea-light Holder, $18, TheBay.com

Work a little black crystal magic

Keep secrets stashed in a hand-polished soapstone container topped with black resin crystals. Eduardo Garza Crystal Box, $70, WestElm.com

Spur them on with silver cactus

A unique decorative take on the classic cacti: Plants that shine on and require no watering. Metalico Barrel Cactus, $16-19, UrbanBarn.com

Hurricane candle creates style storm

Hurricane pillar candle, holder of natural wood and glass, makes for mid-century style. Whole-Home Contemporary Glass Candle Holder, $40, Sears.ca

A golden opportunity to raise the bar

The perfect amount of bling to top a coffee table book. Gold Bar Paperweight, $65, thecross-design.com

ALL PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

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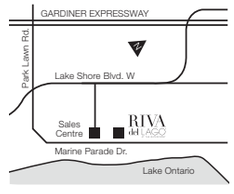

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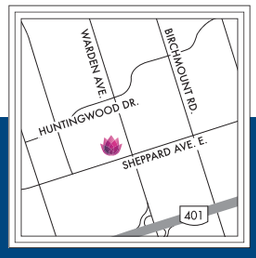

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It's home,

Small is more: A view inside the Morrisons' trailer home shows that you can have all the regular household essentials, even in a t

Tiny house movement.
American family goes small, really small, and finds rewards are huge

MICHELLE CASTILLO
Metro World News in London

With their large house in the perfect neighbourhood, the Morrisons thought they were living the American dream. Soon, the strain of living in a spacious abode began to weigh down on their energy levels and their conscience.

"It went from comfort to resentment," Gabriella Morrison explains. "We didn't have time to enjoy the house because we had to work so much more to pay for it."

Luckily, the Morrisons found a simple solution to their homestead woes: They joined the 'tiny house movement.' Its members share the same ideal that living in small spaces can lead to less complex lives and less waste.

After reading The Small House Book by Jay Shafer, the Morrisons got rid of 50 per cent of their items within six months. Soon after, Gabriella, her husband Andrew and their daughter Terra sold their house, bought a pop-up tent trailer and moved to Baja California, Mexico.

"There's something about living in that teeny tiny pop-up trailer; we were finally able to connect with each other. It's lasted all this time. The changes that we experienced I daresay, it was really permanent," says Gabriella.

Wanting to continue their success, Gabriella and Andrew moved to Ashland, Ore. and built a 32 square metre trailer to live in. The structure, which took four months to build, contains two full-sized beds, a working/eating area, a kitchen, a bathroom and a lounge area for visitors.

To make sure they are living green, Andrew puts a special focus on cooling and heating their place efficiently. The high ceilings and multiple windows help keep the place breezy. A gas-burning fireplace helps warm the residence and allows them to turn off the device if they aren't around. Having a small house enables them to use less energy to accomplish both tasks.

The most expensive piece of "furniture" in the Morrison trailer was a $1,400 composting toilet — a dry toilet that turns human waste into compost, or 'humanure'.

They also purchase smaller-sized items they know that they can finish instead of buying in bulk, so they don't have excessive products and create more waste. In addition, there's no extra storage space in their tiny abode.

"The warehouse shopping thing is an unbelievable myth and farce," Gabriella explained. "You go in and see these amazing deals. The amount of things that went to waste was shocking. It's just too much. You can't use 40 bars of soap in a lifetime."

Three and a half years after making this choice, they have purged 80 per cent of their belongings. They live by the rule that if they don't use something in the last 365 days, they toss it out.

The Morrisons do own one storage unit, but are planning to sell most of the items inside. They allow themselves one Tupperware each for heirlooms. For anything sentimental that's not really needed, they take a picture to keep it in their memories but throw the item away.

Above all, the Morrisons' initiative is about staying simple and becoming independent.

"One of our biggest passions in life is empowering the average person to build their own shelter. With the right information and a little encouragement even those with no previous building experience can handcraft their dream home," adds Andrew.

petite home

ight space. TINY HOUSE BUILD

Humble abode: The house's timber exterior is minimalist in style but feels right at home in its woodland surroundings. TINY HOUSE BUILD

Kitchen cool: It looks just like yours, maybe even better. TINY HOUSE BUILD

A room of one's own — for lucky tween

Admittedly, the Morrisons' living space can get a bit too cramped, especially with their two children to look after. So they built a small lookout cabin 30 metres away for their 12-year-old daughter Terra where she can study and sleep. Andrew has also started a larger treehouse project for his 17-year-old son, who's returned from college prep boarding school in Colorado. It's something he always promised his son since he was a child. "Now, we can finally do it — although the scope of the treehouse has got a lot more complicated," he adds laughing. MWN

Work and rest: Office/eating area and kitchen. TINY HOUSE BUILD

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Design: From trash to good taste

With the world at risk of turning into one big landfill site, we look at ways we can rework, repurpose and reconstitute old junk. Here are our top recycled redesigns

RICHARD PECKETT
Metro World News

FRESHOME.COM

Old glass gets new class

Kleptomaniacs, let there be light. Yes, clutter can become classic with this light-bulb inspiration. Get your hands on one of those dust-collecting planters, pots or glass bottles from your garage or window sill, clean it up and have it cut to size (the DIY delinquents among you might need help with this).

Flush with green pride

PCBCREATIONS.COM

It's the R2-D2 of the toilet world. Computers are one of the biggest producers of unwanted waste and what better way to deal with it than sculpting it into the mother(board) of all latrines. Environmental artist Steven Rodrig restructures recycled printed circuit boards (PCB) into things of sci-fi beauty.

INSTRUCTABLES / MICROLITHIC

Take a light ride: The bicycle lamp

Pedal power will put you in the frame for the future of lighting. Before you tell me to take a hike, just look at these bike lights. If you haven't got an old bicycle, take a hacksaw to the local bicycle rack (joking, we wouldn't really incite theft). After you've jacked the wheels, head over to instructables.com to assemble.

The telephone book chair

The phone directory's days are numbered, but here's a design call you might just want to make. All you need is some old wood (crate, broken chair or anything in between) and some diced and sliced directories to pad out the void. For full instructions, visit instructables.com.

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Keep pup and your home safe

Chew on these ideas to protect your homework — and your home — from that adorable puppy

Puppy behaviour experts recommend these steps to protect your puppy at home:

- Gate off rooms where you don't want your puppy to roam.
- Let puppies earn their freedom. Give them one space or room at a time. That way, owners can actively supervise them and limit any bad behaviour.
- Create a safe confinement area — a crate or exercise pen, for instance — where the puppy can stay when you're not home. There should be enough space for a sleeping area and a potty area when puppies are very young. Also essential are a non-spill water bowl and safe, enriching toys. Toys that are not safe for this area when you are gone include tennis balls, rope toys, toys that are shorter than about double the length of the puppy's snout, and stuffed toys that have glass or plastic eyes and noses, Barlow said.
- Tape loose electrical cords. Use outlet covers.
- Store cleaning chemicals out of reach. Use baby latches on cabinet doors if needed.
- Move breakables and valuables out of the puppy's reach. Roll up new or valuable rugs until the puppy is house-trained.

A puppy rests by a gate that prevents her from entering a formal dining room where there are fragile items. SHIRLEY SALEMY MEYER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

You can teach a new dog old tricks.

Protecting your puppy from harm means your stuff stays intact, too

We bought food bowls, borrowed a crate and dusted off baby gates. But soon after we adopted our 13-week-old puppy, we discovered the house really wasn't ready.

Clove, a Labrador retriever mix, chewed wires we thought were hidden and investigated stairs we thought she'd ignore. She rummaged through deep plastic bins holding smelly shin guards and plucked snow-soaked mittens from our warm radiators. Within a week of her arrival, we had to block off power strips, reorganize our mudroom, devise a new plan for drying winter gear and gate the staircase.

"It's a lot like having an infant in the household," said Pamela Barlow, animal behaviour counsellor at the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' adoption centre in New York City.

Barlow says puppies need constant supervision and a safe environment to explore. She cautions against confining them so much that they don't get outside experiences. It is hard to go back and socialize puppies if owners miss the window of opportunity to do so.

Puppies are drawn to things they can chew on and are stimulated by things that move, said Dr. Carlo Siracusa, director of the Penn Vet Behavior Service at the University of Pennsylvania.

"Many times we think that we should protect our home from a new puppy," Siracusa said, because the puppy could potentially cause damage. But more important is the opposite: making sure that puppies are safe in their new home.

Most essential is to create a safe haven — a place where the puppy can rest and sleep when there is too much excitement or stimulation, such as when kids have friends visiting, Siracusa says.

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New condo sets The Code

The Code Condos. CONTRIBUTED

Meet the condo

- **What.** The Code Condos
- **Builder.** BLVD Developments and Lifetime Developments
- **Location.** St. Clair Avenue and Parkwood Avenue
- **Website.** thecodecondos.com
- **Pricing.** Starting in the mid-$200,000s
- **Building.** Nine-storey boutique mid-rise building
- **Suites.** 108 suites and 10 townhomes
- **Sizes.** From 430 to 2,500 sq. ft.
- **Occupancy.** June 2016

The project overview

A distinguished, nine-storey boutique residence of 108 suites and 10 townhomes located in the heart of the Forest Hill neighbourhood. The residential entrance is located off tree-lined Parkwood Avenue. South facing suites overlook Sir Winston Churchill Park, an expansive 21-acre city park.

Location and transit

Located near the vibrant intersection of St. Clair and Spadina, with the St. Clair LRT streetcar stop steps from the front door and the St. Clair West subway station just a one-minute walk away to get you where you're going.

In the neighbourhood

Nearby recently renovated Loblaws. Steps to historic Forest Hill Village which boasts retail boutiques, restaurants, LCBO, fitness clubs and banks . Close to esteemed private and public schools including Forest Hill Collegiate and Upper Canada College.

Building amenities

Featuring 10 evening-lit tennis courts, off-leash dog park, jogging track, ravine trails and kids' play centre. There's a residents' lounge with bar, large-screen TV, and a fitness studio as well as an executive concierge and pet washing station.

City building requires collaborative thinking

Power of alignment

BRYAN TUCKEY
President and CEO of the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) can be found at twitter.com/bildgta, facebook.com/bildgta, and bildblogs.ca.

Building a condominium tower requires everyone on the construction site to work together, from electricians and drywallers to bricklayers and crane operators. If they all have the same goal in mind, the end result is a safe, quality structure that hundreds of residents can call home.

The same principle can be applied to city-building and to build a great city, we need to align all of the stakeholders involved: Politicians and senior civil servants at both the municipal and provincial level, the industry, new-home buyers and the public.

The GTA has changed dramatically in the last few decades. With up to 100,000 people and 50,000 jobs coming to the GTA every year, our industry is tasked with building quality, complete communities that people can afford to purchase. To accomplish this goal, it is imperative that we align our visions and work collaboratively with integrity to take this great region to the next level.

One of the first things to look at it is the lack of fair and consistent application of provincial planning policy through municipal planning documents.

Imagine a builder looking to develop a condo on a major subway line being told that the area is zoned for bungalows or two-storey homes. This is our reality and it results in delays and unnecessary costs for new-home buyers.

To build quality, complete high-rise communities, municipalities must update their zoning bylaws at the same time as their Official Plans to reflect the intent of Places to Grow. By pre-zoning and predesignating lands, we can streamline the building approval process and save homebuyers money while building great cities.

What's hot on the condo market

DUNCAN MCALLISTER

1. Opening

Park Towers Condominiums Phase II at IQ by Remington. March 29 from 12 to 5 p.m. Visit the sales centre at 1061 The Queensway, Etobicoke.

CONTACT: 416-253-5858, IQCONDOS.COM

2. Open House

Villagio boutique condos and urban towns by Empire Communities in downtown Maple. Head over to Keele Street and Major Mackenzie Dr. W. March 29 from 12 to 5 p.m.

CONTACT: 416-281-7607, VILLAGIO.EMPIRECOMMUNITIES.COM

3. New Release

Mayfield Village Brampton, village-styled community. March 29 from 12 to 5 p.m. Head up to the sales centre at 4585 Mayfield Road, Brampton.

CONTACT: 416-635-7575, MAYFIELDVILLAGE.CA, INFO@MAYFIELDVILLAGE.CA

4. Open House

35 Balmuto St., condos in downtown Toronto. Great Yorkville location on the Bay Street Corridor. Several suites available. March 29 and 30 from 2 to 4 p.m.

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SPORTS 4

Raps make it hard being green

NBA. Toronto wins in Boston for first time in 12 games, claws way to playoffs' doorstep

Terrence Ross scored 24 points, Kyle Lowry 23 and the Toronto Raptors edged closer to their first playoff berth since 2008 with a 99-90 win over the Boston Celtics on Wednesday night.

DeMar DeRozan added 20 points for Toronto, which increased its Atlantic Division lead to 2 1/2 games over Brooklyn, which lost in Charlotte.

Jared Sullinger led Boston with 26 points, going 4-for-6 from three-point range. Boston lost for the seventh time in eight games.

It was Lowry's eighth straight game with 20 or more points and it helped the Raptors snap an 11-game losing streak in Boston.

Toronto captured its 19th road win, one off the club record set in 2000-01.

Boston guard Rajon Rondo was cut on the forehead midway into the third quarter and received nine stitches. He returned to the bench early in the fourth quarter with a bandage that ran from the bridge of his nose straight up to his forehead and he reentered the game with 8:05 to play.

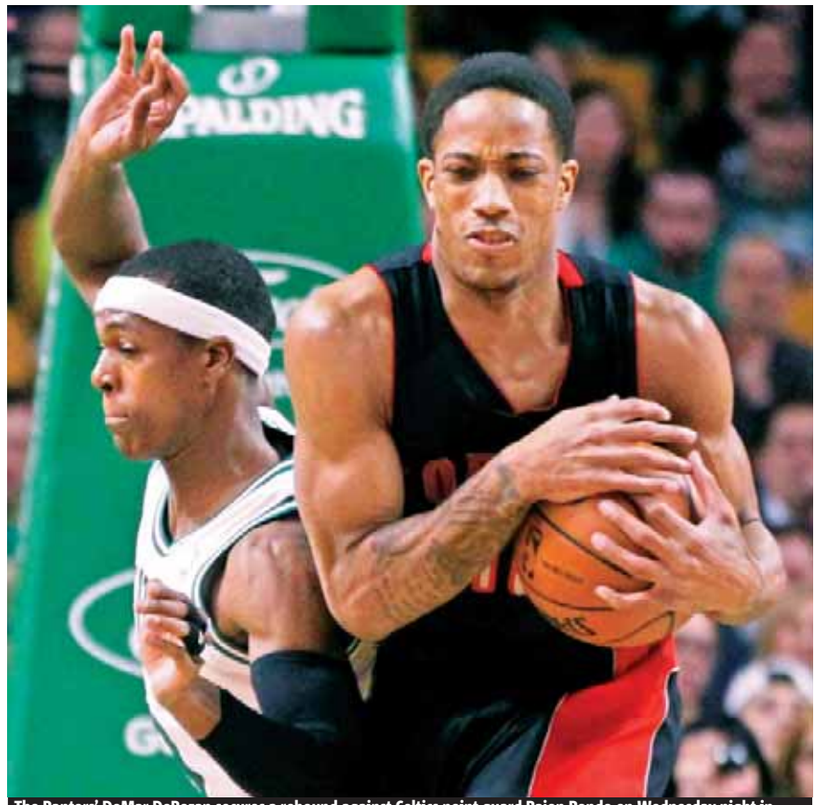
The Raptors had opened a 79-64 lead early in the fourth quarter, but Boston went on a 9-0 run. Toronto pushed it back to 85-75 before Sullinger nailed consecutive threes 34 seconds apart, narrowing it to four points with just under six minutes to play.

Chris Johnson's basket — on an officials' reviewed goaltending call — closed it to 93-90 with 1:49 left, but Lowry and Ross hit consecutive threes on the next two possessions to send the Raptors to the victory. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On Wednesday

99	90
Raptors	Celtics

- With a New York Knicks loss on Wednesday night in Sacramento, the Raptors would have clinched a playoff berth. Go to metronews.ca to see how the Knicks fared against the Kings.



The Raptors' DeMar DeRozan secures a rebound against Celtics point guard Rajon Rondo on Wednesday night in Boston. ELISE AMENDOLA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dustin McGowan TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

McGowan lands in Jays' rotation

Dustin McGowan admits he was "speechless" when he was told Wednesday morning he would open the season in the Blue Jays' starting rotation.

It's tough to blame the 32-year-old right-hander — or anyone else who has followed his star-crossed career, for that matter. McGowan hasn't cracked an opening-day roster in six years and hasn't started a major-league game since September 2011. His career looked all but over barely a year ago, as he rehabbed from yet another season-ending shoulder surgery.

But now he's going to start the Jays' home opener against the New York Yankees on April 4, in front of a sellout crowd.

"I think it'll hit me more once that day comes," McGowan said. "It's an honour and I really can't wait to do it."

The Jays settled their starting rotation and made their final cuts on Wednesday, sending struggling left-hander J.A. Happ to the 15-day disabled list (back) and retaining all three of their on-the-bubble arms — Todd Redmond, Esmil Rogers and Jeremy Jeffress — in an eight-man bullpen.

Josh Thole was also named as the backup catcher over Erik Kratz, who will report to Triple-A Buffalo. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Time to look ahead, Leafs fans

THE HOCKEY NEWS
Adam Proteau
toronto@metronews.ca

As the Maple Leafs send their fans into fits of panic with a six-game losing streak, the tendency of some will be to demand change from the top of the organization to its bottom. But wholesale change and a full housecleaning isn't the answer. The franchise does have some jewels worth hanging onto at all costs. Regardless of what takes place in Toronto's final eight regular-season games, Leafs fans can take some consolation in the pieces of the puzzle that will remain next season and beyond. Here's who they are:

1. Jonathan Bernier. The Leafs acquired Bernier last summer to be their No. 1 goalie and he's stepped up to grab the reins. The 25-year-old is under contract at a very affordable $2.9 million next season and will be a restricted free agent in the summer of 2015. Many teams are searching for stability in net, but Toronto is no longer one of them.

2. Phil Kessel. Certainly, Kessel's reputation will take another hit if the Leafs collapse and don't make the playoffs. But he's on pace for a career-high 40 goals and at age 26 is just entering his prime. You don't trade a scorer of his calibre, unless you're getting a better scorer. And there aren't too many better scores than Kessel.

The Leafs didn't fare much better with James Reimer, left, on the bench and Jonathan Bernier starting on Tuesday night. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

3. James van Riemsdyk. With 28 goals and 57 points in 72 games, van Riemsdyk has already demolished his previous personal offensive bests and is still just 24. He's also signed through the 2017-18 season with a $4.25-million cap hit and forms a perfect match with Kessel. Fans would be justified in rioting if he's dealt, but that's not happening.

4. Morgan Rielly. Yes, Rielly has Toronto's third-worst plus/minus rating (minus-15), but the rookie blue-liner is playing more than 17 minutes a game, jumping into the rush with ease and proving himself NHL-worthy at the tender age of 20. His game has room to grow, but team brass is more than pleased with what they've seen thus far and see the sky as the limit for what he can do.

In the worst-case scenario for this season, the Leafs miss the playoffs and changes take place both in management (I can't see head coach Randy Carlyle keeping his job) and on the roster. But if you're going to criticize what's gone on in Toronto this year — and you should — you also have to acknowledge there are some solid building blocks for now and for the foreseeable future.

First-period problems

17

Over the past eight games, the Leafs have allowed a whopping 17 first-period goals, including the two given up in Tuesday night's 5-3 loss to the St. Louis Blues. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A footballer's full nelson

Liverpool's Steven Gerrard celebrates scoring the first goal against Sunderland with teammate Luis Suarez at Anfield on Wednesday in Liverpool. The Reds won 2-1 and moved within one point of English Premier League-leading Chelsea. ALEX LIVESEY/GETTY IMAGES

La Liga. Real Madrid falls to third in title chase

Cristiano Ronaldo reacts after a missed scoring chance in Wednesday's loss in Seville, Spain. GETTY IMAGES

Real Madrid lost 2-1 at Sevilla Wednesday as it slipped behind in the Spanish title race, while Atletico Madrid and Barcelona won to move ahead in the standings. Cristiano Ronaldo put Madrid in charge with his 27th of the season in the 14th minute, but Sevilla's Carlos Bacca's pair completed the comeback. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLS

Elbow costs TFC's Jackson a game

Major League Soccer has suspended Toronto FC's Brazilian midfielder Jackson one game and fined him for "aggressive inflammatory behaviour" in Saturday's 1-0 win over D.C. United.

Jackson was yellow carded after elbowing D.C. United midfielder Davy Arnaud in an off-the-ball incident in the 50th minute at BMO Field. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Bills not going anywhere soon

Ralph Wilson fulfilled his vow in keeping the Bills in Buffalo during his lifetime.

Though they won't be leaving any time soon following the 95-year-old Pro Football Hall of Fame owner's death, their long-term future is in question.

The Bills are essentially locked in to play at Ralph Wilson Stadium for the next six years because of a non-relocation provision included in the team's lease agreement that would require the Bills to pay a $400-million penalty if they leave before the 2019 season.

"Anyone expecting to see the Los Angeles Bills is sorely mistaken," Sports-Corp president Marc Ganis said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thursday, March 27, 2014

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Hopefully you will see solutions today where before you saw only problems. That applies to all areas of your life but especially to money matters and business issues that involve other people. Together you can make a profit and have fun.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Do you get involved in a feud between friends? You know the answer already, so don't be silly and stand between them to try to keep the peace. If you do, they will gang up on you.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
If you can get someone else to do some of your chores for you today then go for it. You have more important matters to take care of and you may not have energy to spare.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Others can sense your self-confidence and because of that they want to do things for you. Who are you to refuse any offers? It will give you more time to work on a creative project.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If you need help over the next 24 hours come out and ask for it. If you wait for others to realize that you require assistance chances are you will never get it. They can't read your mind.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You will find it easy to express yourself today and, more importantly, others will find it easy to understand you. If you are involved in a creative pursuit this is also a good time to impress important people.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You'll hear something to your benefit today but your suspicious nature could hold you back from taking advantage. Unless there's evidence someone is trying to trick you, take a chance.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You'll find it easy to work out what is going on in someone's mind today, which in turn will help you decide what you should do next. You see the kind of body language that other people miss.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
It's not like you to withdraw into your shell but you may do so over the next 24 hours. That's OK. You have important issues to decide on and you won't think straight if there is too much noise around you.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
No matter how busy you may be work wise, make an effort to free up some time to spend with your loved ones. They are the people who really matter.

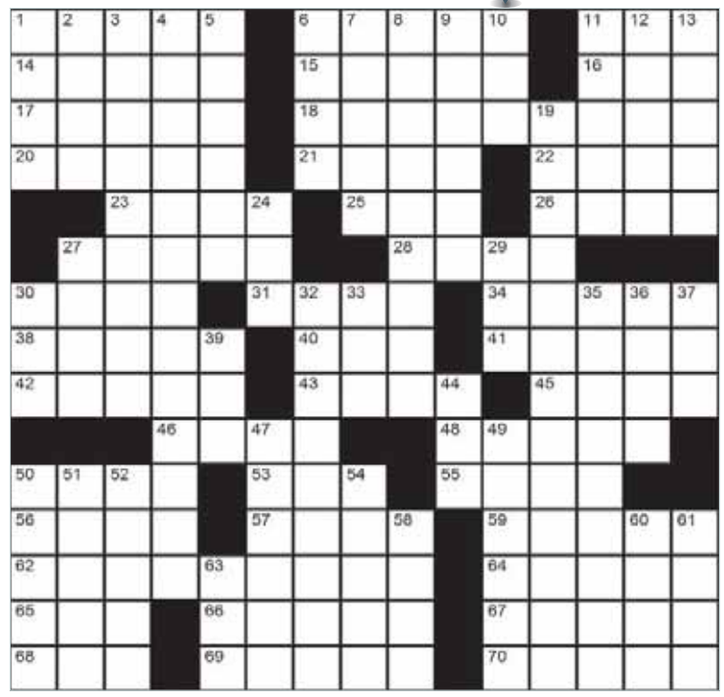
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
A remark you toss out into the conversation may not be meant in a negative way but that's how one person may take it. If they do seem offended let them know that you meant no harm.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Something will happen today that makes you wonder if there is more going on behind the scenes. Make it your business to find out why certain people are acting so strangely – and use what you discover for your own advantage. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

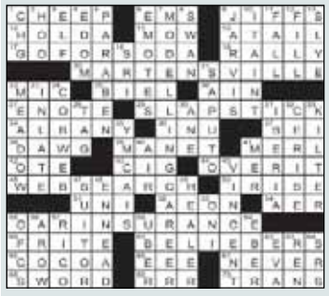
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Crockett's "Miami Vice" partner
6. Mythological blood
11. Do
14. __ __ ease (Jittery)
15. Canadian specialty channel
16. __ constrictor
17. Q. "John, George and Ringo ...who's missing?" A. "__, _ think!"
18. Lawyer's briefcase items, briefly: 2 wds.
20. Fishhook line
21. Oohs' pals
22. Funny person
23. __ buckle
25. Traveller's li'l way
26. Other
27. Archie's jalopy, Ol' __
28. Furniture store
30. Jeanne _'__
31. Actress Tara
34. Google service
38. "The Jetsons" character
40. Boot bit
41. Hog
42. Self-congratulatory exclamation!: 2 wds.
43. English river
45. Medieval chest
46. "No __!" (Casual response to "Thanks.")
48. Flashlight precursor
50. Dad
53. Nothing
55. Certain currency
56. Cook's need
57. Bunch
59. "Leggo!"
62. Newfoundland community on the Burin Peninsula
64. James __, White House architect
65. Photo
66. ABBA's "__ _ Chance on Me"
67. Country's Mr. Adkins
68. Tricky
69. Publicity
70. Flower sort

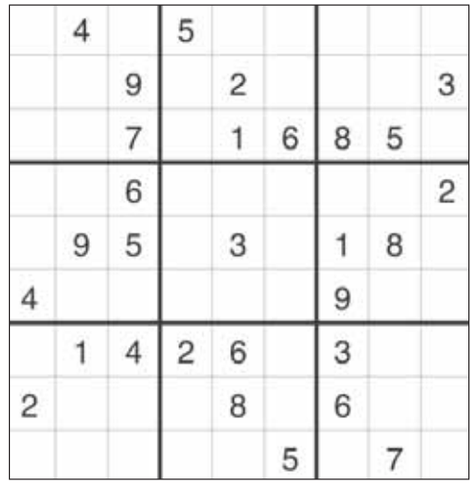
Down
1. Points
2. Mongolia city, __ Bator
3. Oxford, NS: The '__ Capital of Canada'
4. The 'Royal Winnipeg', for one, in dance: 2 wds.
5. Neil Young bandmate, Stephen __
6. Island: Spanish
7. Exonerate
8. The Bay of Fundy is world famous for them: 2 wds.
9. Ric of The Cars
10. Fam. member
11. Heated up, as in cooking
12. Ms. Chanel's
13. Preference
19. 'And Now the Legacy Begins' Hip-Hop greats from Toronto: 2 wds.
24. Norse god of strife
27. Community in The Muskokas in Ontario that has an annual cranberry festival
29. For instances, for short
30. Actress Susan
32. Where Mayor of Toronto Rob Ford was born
33. Promissory note
35. That which Canadian ace Billy Bishop had to engage in during WWI: 2 wds.
36. Length measure
37. Grassland
39. "__ Blues" by The Beatles
44. Printemps follower
47. GM car safety system
49. Alanis Morissette's: "You __ Know"
50. Showy showings
51. Be of service
52. A brother of Ron Weasley's in 'Harry Potter' books
54. 17th-century English composer, Henry __
58. Scientific 'strands'
60. Immobilizing spray
61. Power [abbr.]
63. "Plush" rock gr.

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku

4	1	8	2	3	8	5	7	9
5	9	3	6	7	1	4	2	8
7	2	8	9	5	4	1	6	3
3	7	5	4	8	6	9	1	2
8	6	1	5	2	9	3	4	7
9	4	2	7	1	3	8	5	6
1	3	7	8	6	5	2	9	4
6	8	4	1	9	2	7	3	5
2	5	9	3	4	7	6	8	1

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						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

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™The Hyundai names, logos, product names, feature names, images and slogans are trademarks owned by Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. ΩPrice adjustments are calculated against the vehicle's starting price. Price adjustments of up to $1,500/$1,250/$1,500/$11,000 available on in stock 2014 Elantra L 6-Speed Manual / 2014 Accent 4 Door L 6-Speed Manual / 2014 Sonata GL Auto/ 2013 Genesis 5.0L GDI R-Spec on cash purchases only for March 19-31, 2014 (inclusive). Price adjustments applied before taxes. Offer cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available offers. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. †Finance offer available O.A.C. from Hyundai Financial Services based on a new 2014 Elantra L 6-Speed Manual / 2014 Accent 4 Door L 6-Speed Manual / 2014 Sonata GL Auto / 2014 Santa Fe 2.4L FWD with an annual finance rate of 0% for 60 months. Bi-weekly payments are $124/$106/$187/$204. $0/$0/$0/$0 down payment required. Cost of Borrowing is $0/$0/$0/$0. Finance offer includes Delivery and Destination of $1,550/$1,550/$1,650/$1,760, fees, levies, and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Finance offer excludes registration, insurance, PPSA and license fees. Delivery and Destination charge includes freight, P.D.E., dealer admin fees and a full tank of gas. ♦Price of models shown: 2014 Elantra Limited / 2014 Accent 4 Door GLS / 2014 Sonata Limited/ 2014 Santa Fe 2.0T Limited AWD are $23,835/$19,135/$31,685/$40,795. Prices include price adjustments of $1,500/$1,250/$1,500 and Delivery and Destination charges of $1,550/$1,550/$1,650/$1,760 fees, levies, and all applicable charges (excluding HST). Prices exclude registration, insurance, PPSA and license fees. ≠Purchasers or lessees of a new / 2014 Santa Fe 2.4L FWD ,who can provide a valid vehicle registration showing current ownership of a Hyundai vehicle, will be entitled to a $750 price adjustment. Price adjustment applies after taxes. Offer cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available offers. Offer expires on March 31, 2014. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. ♦†Ω*≠Offers available for a limited time, and subject to change or cancellation without notice. Dealer may sell for less. Inventory is limited, dealer order may be required. Visit www.hyundaicanada.com or see dealer for complete details. ††Hyundai's Comprehensive Limited Warranty coverage covers most vehicle components against defects in workmanship under normal use and maintenance conditions.